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# A Critical Ethnography of Young Adolescents' Occupational Choices in a Community in Post-apartheid South Africa

Roshan Galvaan

Thesis Presented for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Division of Occupational Therapy  
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

February 2010

Co-supervisors: Prof SI. Amosun and Ass Prof L van Niekerk



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# Abstract

This thesis explored the occupational choices of young adolescents in a southern peninsula Cape Town community of Lavender Hill in South Africa. Informed by current research and prior professional and personal experiences with young adolescents in Lavender Hill, the research question asked: 'What informs occupational choice among young adolescents in Lavender Hill?' This complemented the research aim, which was to generate insight into the nature of the occupational choices of a group of young adolescents in Lavender Hill, and the factors that influenced their occupational choices. A critical ethnographic method of inquiry was applied over four years with data gathering consisting of photovoice methods and photo-elicitation interviews based on photographs that participants had taken, followed by participant observation sessions. Interviews were also conducted with participants' parents or guardians. The data analysis led to findings that identified the nature of and influences on the participants' occupational choices. The findings were captured in one theme, namely *Is net so* (It's just like that) with two categories, that is *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) and *Wies wys* (Be sussed). It was evident that the participants' occupational choices emerged in direct relation to their occupational engagement. Factors within the context were shown as significant influences on their occupational choices. The nature of these occupational choices were complex.

The enfolded nature of occupational choice was elaborated upon as consisting of occupational and temporal qualities as well as practical conscious mechanisms. This enfolded nature of occupational choice was shaped by the young adolescents' experiences of and exposure to the historically predicated patterns of occupations at a community level, low educational expectations, established subcultures and subgroups and the competition for symbolic status. Reciprocally, these contextual factors were also preserved by the enfolded nature of the young adolescents' occupational choices. Occupational choice was identified as convoluted when the contextual relevance and

coherent patterns of occupational choices at individual, group and community levels intersected. Despite the many years since the end of apartheid in South Africa, the young adolescents' occupational choices reflected patterns associated with apartheid's legacy.

Appreciating the enfolded and convoluted nature of occupational choice together with the prevailing connection with the contextual features, suggestions are made for practice in occupational therapy and for conceptualisation of occupational choice in occupational science.

# Definition of Terms

## **Apartheid:**

was a system of legal racial segregation enforced by the National Party government in South Africa between 1948 and 1994, under which the rights of the majority black inhabitants of South Africa were curtailed and minority rule by whites was maintained ... [L]egislation classified inhabitants into racial groups ('black', 'white', 'coloured', and 'Indian'), and residential areas were segregated by means of forced removals. From 1958, Blacks were deprived of their citizenship, legally becoming citizens of one of ten tribally based self-governing homelands called *bantustans*, four of which became nominally independent states. The government segregated education, medical care, and other public services, and provided black people with services inferior to those of whites (Wikipedia, 2010b).

**Childhood:** is understood as a social construction (Prout & James, 1990, p 79). It appears as a specific structural, and cultural component of many societies. It is a variable of social analysis and cannot be divorced from other variables such as gender, race, class. There are multiple variations of childhoods and as such it is not universal.

**Coloureds:** refers to people with creolised identities which are shaped and re-shaped by current and historical practices in South Africa (Erasmus, 2001b). Under apartheid, 'coloured' was one of the race classifications.

**Creolisation:** involves the construction of identity out of elements of ruling as well as subaltern cultures. The associated cultural creativity occurs under circumstances of marginality (Erasmus, 2001b, p 16).

**Gamtaal:** is a dialect of Afrikaans spoken on the Cape Flats, and may be translated to mean crude or uncouth language.

**Intersectionality:** is a major analytical tool that challenges hegemonic approaches to the study of stratification and identity politics (Yuval-Davis, 2006). An intersectional analysis involves examining "concrete experiences and positions of subjects in terms of a multiplicity of identities, e.g. black working-class women or white middle class men"; while also investigating "the range of social processes which cannot be encapsulated by

the sex/gender, race/ethnicity and class i.e. the multiple situational elements that produce social outcomes” (Yuval-Davis, Anthias, & Kofman, 2005, p530)

**Learners:** are young adolescents at primary school in Lavender Hill.

**Network sampling:** refers to a strategy where successive participants are named by preceding groups or individuals (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

**Occupation:** is a type of relational action through which habit, context and creativity are coordinated toward a provisional yet particular meaningful outcome that is always in process; the type of occupation is defined by the particular combination of habit, context, creativity and provisional outcome (Cutchin, Aldrich, Bailliard, Coppola, 2008).

**Occupational choice:** involves the selection of occupations, as co-constructed through an individual, group and community’s transactional relationship with their context. The selection of an occupation is an unfolding process of differentiating between preferences for action as shaped by the context. The selection process may be deliberate, or informed by a practical sense that guides how people operate as social agents; it manifests in occupational performance and engagement.

**Occupational engagement:** captures the broadest of perspectives on occupation. It encompasses all that one does to involve oneself or to become occupied (Polatajko et al., 2007d, p24).

**Occupational perspective:** describes a standpoint whereby the significance of phenomena is described in relation to relational human action as described in the discipline of occupational science. It appreciates that human action is shaped through habit, context and creativity.

**Occupational participation:** “involvement in a life situation (World Health Organisation, 2001) through occupation”(Polatajko et al., 2007d, p26).

**Occupational pattern:** occupational patterns as the regular and predicable way of doing which occurs when human beings organise activities and occupations” (Bendixon, 1996).

**Occupational performance:** “the actual execution or carrying out of an occupation” (Polatajko et al., 2007d, p26).

**Post-apartheid:** refers to more than just the end of apartheid, but involves breaking with the ways of being and thinking associated with apartheid.

**Race:** the construct of race refers to terms such as whiteness and blackness. Race is a social, rather than biological category which is constructed and can be deconstructed and challenged. It is associated with material power and privilege. Race conditions in South Africa form part of daily experiences (Distiller & Steyn, 2004a).

**Shack:** a small, crudely-built dwelling, usually constructed from wood or corrugated iron; dwellers usually do not have easy access to water, sanitation and electricity.

**Students:** refers to an Occupational Therapy student studying at the University of Cape Town.

**Structure:** society is defined by a social system that is characterised by definitive structural principles. This social structure is not fixed, rather it is carried in reproduced practices embedded in time and space (Jenkins, 1992).

**Sussed:** to infer or discover and to figure out (Dictionary.com, 2004) the way things are done in Lavender Hill.

**Young adolescents:** adolescents between the ages of ten and thirteen.

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# Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study, introduces coloured identity, the local community where the research was carried out, the research question, purpose and aim, the significance of the study, and an overview of the layout of the thesis.

## 1.1 Background to the study

In this thesis, I set out to generate particular insights into the nature of occupational choices of a group of young adolescents in a local community (Lavender Hill) in South Africa. This community was established as a township for coloureds under apartheid as part of the scheme to forcibly remove certain race groups from the centre of the city to outlying areas.

I also attempted to gain insight into the factors that influenced the occupational choices of the young adolescents living there. At the outset, I envisaged that the insight would inform interventions that could promote occupational justice in the community some 10 years after the end of the apartheid era. In initiating this research process, I had the opportunity to reflect on how I got to the starting point in the first place. The phrase ‘neither by design nor by default’ captures my experiences in becoming a student in the undergraduate occupational therapy education program, and later focusing on designing occupational therapy practice to benefit young adolescents.

My upbringing as an adolescent exposed me to the challenges of the political struggle against apartheid. Growing up, I had family and strong role-models who strived to their utmost to develop my capacity in preparation for a future devoid of social injustice. This nurturing environment urged me to grow beyond the wider restrictive environment. Though I was protected from direct engagement with some political-

resistance in my community, I still experienced the impacts. With the advantage of being supported, I noticed that not everyone shared the same experiences as me. More radically, not everyone had the support and aspirations that enabled them to imagine a future far beyond the present. I saw and experienced the restraining, even fatal impact that apartheid had on my friends, my family members and others. Collectively, we had no choice but to maintain conscious engagement with the restrictive impact of apartheid.

During my junior years as a student in occupational therapy education, my part-time summer vacation work was as a recreational play facilitator. I worked in areas like Manenberg and Lavender Hill, areas renowned for their political violence, and declared 'no-go' zones by authorities. My work, as part of a local municipality team, entailed entering into these areas in a mini-van and inviting children, over a loud-hailer, to come and play with us on a nearby open field or park. We would be dropped there for about four hours and would have to play games with between fifty to one hundred children who arrived to play with us. These children were growing up under compromising conditions. The rationale for this programme was to encourage children to 'come and play' and through that to expose them to positive role-models who could keep them positively occupied and through this change their lives. Playing and forming relationships with children in these parks sensitised me to their needs, the inequity of their situations and their occupational needs. I believe that this self-character building somewhat intensified my choice to become an occupational therapist. This was during the last years of apartheid in South Africa.

The single most important piece of information that motivated me to become an occupational therapist was that I believed that occupational therapy was a profession that involved doing things that could make a significant difference in people's living circumstances. As my career developed, my desire to find how I could achieve this in my practice remained. After qualifying as an occupational therapist, I initially worked with women with acute psychosis in a tertiary academic setting. With time, I became dissatisfied with what I saw as my limited practice contribution. I questioned how my interpretation of the relationship between South African socio-economic and societal factors related to the experience of mental illness. Given my restlessness with my practice, I seized the first available opportunity to practice elsewhere. Coincidentally, I was afforded the opportunity to work as a lecturer at the Department of Occupational

Therapy at the University of Cape Town. This position led me to explore my potential contribution to the academic enterprise. I recognised that the only area of expertise needed in the department related to the issues and needs of adolescents. For this reason, together with my interest in contributing to South African society, in 2001 I assumed responsibility for making a contribution to occupational therapy education and practice in working with adolescents.

My view was that adolescents, especially young adolescents, were entering into a precious stage of identity formation which would impact on the occupational choices that they made and importantly, this would shape their futures and possibly change their community's prospective story. Thus, when I decided to focus on adolescents as an academic interest, it was no surprise that I was attracted to exploring possibilities for occupational therapy practice in Lavender Hill when the area was still being described as a 'gang war zone' and in need of paramilitary patrol. I questioned the existing situation for adolescents, especially young adolescents as part of post-apartheid South Africa. This questioning was informed by, and reminded me of, my previous experiences with young adolescents. Upon reflection, I realised that the intentions and efforts of ongoing programmes such as the one I had contributed to as a student had a limited impact on changing the choices and occupations that children in Lavender Hill engaged in. I assumed that if I could contribute as an occupational therapist, I needed to understand how. My observations as a recreational worker during my undergraduate education and as a lecturer responsible for the area of adolescents in occupational therapy (OT) education, in addition to my personal life journey led me to want to explore the factors that influenced the occupational choices of young adolescents living in Lavender Hill.

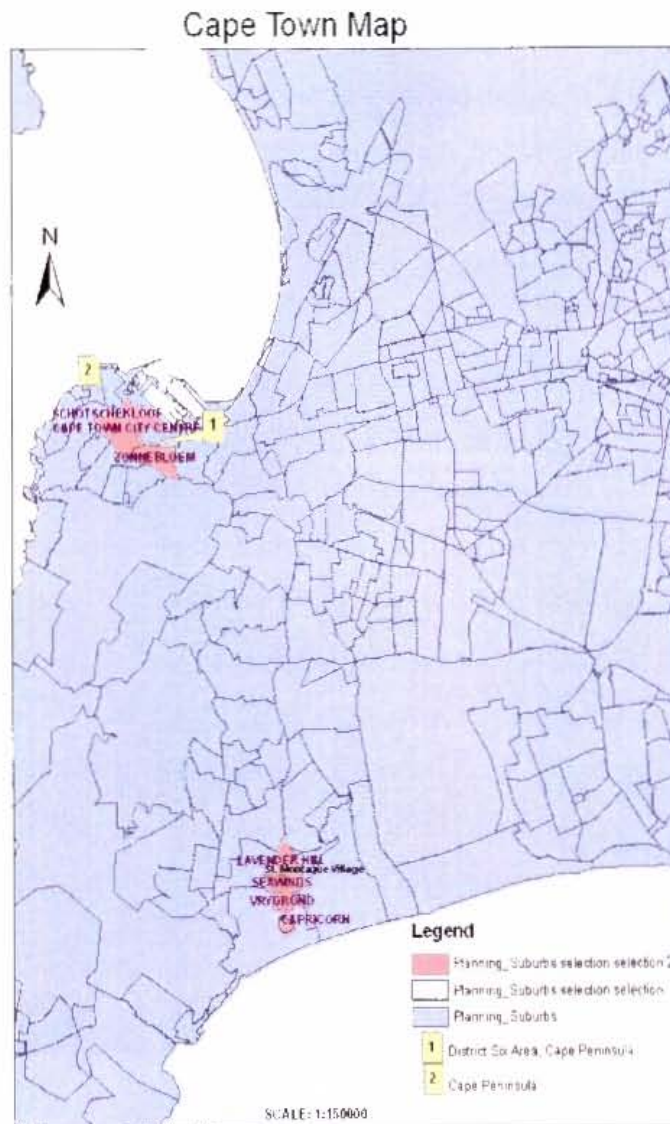
## **1.2 Coloured identity**

Many of the young adolescents living in Lavender Hill would identify with a coloured identity. However, coloured identity is a much debated, even contested construct of identity in South Africa. The debates move beyond merely understanding colouredness as the meaning attached to skin colour or being of mixed race. In fact the concept of mixing race is rejected as a fallacy based on the existence of a pure race (Erasmus, 2001b).



### 1.3 Lavender Hill

**Map 1: Lavender Hill in relation to central Cape Town business district**  
(Mbitsa, 2009a)



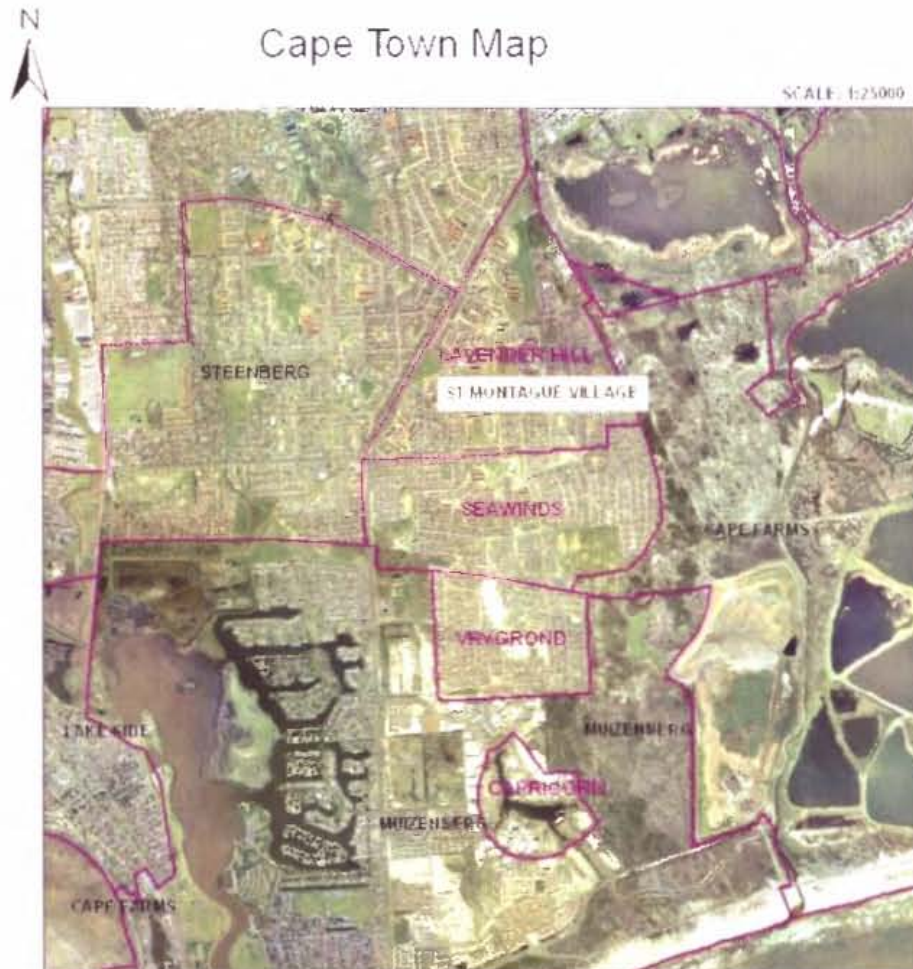
Lavender Hill is an area on the Cape Flats in the Southern Peninsula of Cape Town. Lavender Hill and Vrygrond were constructed between 1972 and 1974 under the South African Group Areas Act (1950). This legislation proclaimed that different racial groups live in separate areas according to their designated races. Residents, many of whom were previous property owners in affected areas were forced to sell their properties for very little and could not afford to buy properties in the areas they were removed to (Naidoo & Dreyer, 1984). For many of the people who were moved to Lavender Hill and Vrygrond the housing rental costs increased. Coloured people were forcibly moved from

prestigious areas close to central business districts with recreation facilities and resources to areas without, and far away from, infrastructure.

Since the Western Cape was a coloured preferential labour area, people classified as black under apartheid legislation were not readily allowed into areas such as Vrygrond and Lavender Hill. Lavender Hill remains characterised by poverty and community violence, lack of opportunities or services for youth, gangsterism and drug abuse. People live in overcrowded conditions, lack access to social services and have poor access to formal recreational opportunities. Statistical socio-economic indicators have reflected high levels of unemployment; low income and educational levels in Lavender Hill (StatsSA, 2001).

The inadequacy of social, recreational and educational facilities in Lavender Hill still continues since its inception during apartheid. For example, at the time of constructing these areas, three schools were erected, all in Lavender Hill. Two were primary schools, namely Prince George and Levana Primary and one high school, Lavender Hill High. Vrygrond did not have any schools until 2008, when a primary school was started in Vrygrond. Further to this, from these original two areas, at least three more areas without designated educational facilities have developed. The areas of St Montague village, Capricorn and Seawinds all rely on most of the original Lavender Hill infrastructure. The map below indicates the proximity of these areas.

**Map 2: Lavender Hill, Vrygrond, Seawinds, St Montague Village and Capricorn**  
(Mbitsa, 2009b)



In addition to the original two primary schools, two new primary schools but no high schools have been developed in the Lavender Hill area. Children from all of the aforementioned areas attend the primary schools in Lavender Hill. For example, 1 171 learners are enrolled at Levana primary, while there are only thirty teachers on the staff. This gives an average ratio of thirty-nine learners to one teacher (Levana Primary School, 2010). Consequently, the schools are overcrowded offering little opportunity for

oppressive historical legacy and despite the dismantling of apartheid, black South African children have inherited the omissions of the previous government (Leatt, 2006). Even though an urban crisis of social fragmentation looms in many townships, young adolescents are challenged to develop resilience and resist involvement in health-compromising behaviours (Standing, 2003). Political violence has receded, but interpersonal violence remains high and this has been raised as a public health concern (Norman, Matzopoulos, Groenewald, & Bradshaw, 2007). The National Injury Mortality Surveillance system has highlighted that the leading cause of death in males and females in the Cape Town area is violence (Donson, 2008). However, a higher percentage of males (that is 49.9%) compared to females (35.2%) died as a result of violence (ibid). In the ten to fourteen year age group, the leading manner of death was undetermined, but in the 15 to 24 year group violence accounted for 67.8% of deaths (Donson, 2008). Given the high occurrence of violence, significant attention has been directed towards the prevention of violence (Corolissen, Jacobs, & Riet, 2001; Duncan & Rock, 1994; Eliasov & Frank, 2000; Matzopoulos, Meyers, Bowman, & Mathews, 2008; Parkes, 2002) and risk behaviours (Flisher, 1996; Reddy et al., 2003; Standing, 2003).

The Youth Risk Behaviour Surveillance System was developed by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States of America. Its purpose was to provide a standardised tool that could be used to measure levels of priority risk behaviour so that interventions could be planned accordingly (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, 1990). In 2002 the Ministers of Health and Education in South Africa commissioned the Medical Research Council to undertake a national Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (Reddy et al., 2003). The Youth Risk Behaviour Surveillance System's survey (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, 1990) was adapted to form the South African Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS). This was intended for use with South African high school learners. Results of the South African National YRBS study showed that 6.2% of learners report having first smoked a cigarette before the age of ten, 12% of participants report having had their first drink of alcohol before the age of thirteen, and 14.4% of learners had their first sexual encounter at age thirteen or younger (Reddy et al., 2003). The nation's YRBS articulated the need to investigate the risk behaviours of younger adolescents and expressed concern with the co-occurrence of risk behaviours (Amosun, Reddy, Kambaran, & Omardien, 2007; Reddy et al., 2003; Reddy, Resnicow, Omardien, & Mbewu, 2008). From a psychological perspective, the

expressed concern was that young adolescents are prone to negative developmental trajectories (Dawes & Donald, 2000; Flisher et al., 2000). Through describing the risk taking behaviours, previous research intended to gain insight that could assist in the design of violence prevention and health promotion programmes. The belief that adolescence presents as a critical period for acquiring health promoting behaviours and attitudes that may persist throughout adulthood was critical to this intention (Dawes & Donald, 2000). While the descriptive nature of the above research provided valuable explanations of what risk behaviours were engaged in, it did not identify the reasons that young adolescents attributed for engaging in these behaviours. Also, in relation to their occupational repertoires it was likely that these behaviours were one part, albeit significant, of their repertoires. This reasoning incited my concern with the full range of young adolescents' occupational choices and not just with their participation in occupations that placed them at risk.

#### **1.4.2 Contextualisation: Coloured identity and Lavender Hill**

Painfully in South Africa, previous racial categorisations are still part of the country's lived reality (Distiller & Steyn, 2004b). On the Cape Flats, there are distinct areas which are considered to be the home of coloured people, both by outsiders and residents (Standing, 2003). The explicit reference to race in this thesis reflects this reality as it contributes to the frame of understanding young adolescents' identities in Lavender Hill.

Grounded in the apartheid government's social engineering implemented through the Group Areas Act ("Group areas Act", Act No 41 of 1950), Lavender Hill was established as a coloured residential area. Recent community statistics on the area reflects these segregationist beginnings. The racial profile of residents reveals that under 2% of the population is black; 98% is coloured; 0.25% is Indian and under 0.07% is white (StatsSA, 2001). The segregationist, poor apartheid housing provision led to the development of urban poverty (Boaden, 1978). In Lavender Hill apartment-style blocks of flats referred to as *kortse*, became the homes for many. This remains the second most popular type of dwelling in Lavender Hill, with small brick houses accounting for the most common form (StatsSA, 2001). Many of the brick houses have shacks in their backyards, although there are also many shacks that are on undeveloped land. A small percentage of people live in dwellings made with traditional materials (StatsSA, 2001).

Eighty-four percent of the formal dwellings have access to piped cold water. With time, living in the variety of dwellings, such as the shacks and the *kortse*, has developed as a taken for granted part of living in an area, such as Lavender Hill on the Cape Flats (Institute for Security Studies, August 1998).

At the same time, further legislation contained in the Coloured Labour Preference policy (Goldin, 1987) created a hierarchy of deprivation where coloureds were given job preference over blacks. This ensured that ready, cheap labour was available for the textile, clothing, farming and canning industries in the Western Cape (Goldin, 1987). People were limited with regards to job availability and which jobs they could access based on their race (Simons & Simons, 1983). Until as recently as 1986, the labour law gave coloured people living in Lavender Hill work preference over other black people. The racial segregation of residence and labour highlights that oppression under apartheid aimed not only to racially discriminate and oppress black people, it also aimed to economically exploit black people to benefit white people (Shope, 1964). The preference given to different races created a hierarchy of access for capacity development and opportunities to engage in occupations. Thus racism under apartheid flourished together with certain processes of capitalist accumulation in South Africa. Race and class were inherently linked under apartheid and are still strongly associated in post-apartheid South Africa. Lavender Hill is one example of a working class community where coloured people were historically designated to become part of the inferior sector of the labour market. This meant that people living in Lavender Hill were expected, even encouraged to enter and remain in low income, low status working class positions serving industries' demands. The current education profile of adults over the age of twenty in Lavender Hill reflects this in that it shows that four percent (4%) of the adults have no schooling while thirty five percent (35%) of them have only primary school education (StatsSA, 2001). Not even a quarter of a percent (0.25%) of adults have tertiary education. For school-going children in an area such as Lavender Hill this means being part of a low, working socio-economic class who seem to have little prosperity (Abrahams, 2007-2008) even though they are supposed to have more opportunities in the new South Africa.

Young adolescents living in Lavender Hill experience social injustices and are at risk of experiencing occupational injustice. It is against this historically complex reality that young adolescents negotiate their daily occupational choices.

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

Scant research and narrow consideration in literature were found to be focused specifically on occupational choice. The existing work has emphasised an individual oriented perspective on occupational choice (Kielhofner, 2008a, 2008c; Minato & Zemke, 2004). Although the influence of subjective and contextual dimensions were recognised (Pierce, 2003b) and the influence of cultural continuity (Bonder, 2007b) was asserted, a need remained to further investigate the nature of occupational choice. Added to this is the important role assigned to occupational choice within the promotion of occupational justice. It is assumed that diversity and access to occupational choice (Polatajko et al., 2007b) is key to achieving occupational justice. The factors influencing occupational choice contribute to the achievement of occupational justice. By critically exploring the nature of occupational choice as it applies to young adolescents living in Lavender Hill, this study offers a perspective on the position of occupational choice in relation to occupational justice. It is further asserted that critically exploring the nature of and influences on the occupational choices of a group, such as young adolescents living in Lavender Hill, who are at risk of experiencing occupational injustice will add an important dimension to the insight into occupational choice.

My observations in Lavender Hill over the years together with interpretations of the literature led me to the research question: 'What informs occupational choice among young adolescents in Lavender Hill?' This would offer insight into the circumstances surrounding their occupational choices. I believed in relation to this question, the aim of the research would be to generate insight into the nature of and influences on the occupational choices of a group of young adolescents in Lavender Hill. The purpose of this study was to generate knowledge into occupational choice as an element that could contribute to promoting occupational justice for young adolescents living in Lavender Hill.

This study would intentionally take up the challenges unveiled from a critical review of the literature. I envisaged that this would indulge my personal expectations for transformative practice that allowed for the re-imagination of coloured identities beyond the inhibitions of the apartheid legacy. My professional intent was that this



would contribute to innovative, relevant South African practice that promoted social change.

## **1.6 Overview of layout of thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters. The current chapter has introduced the background to this study, the local community of Lavender Hill with an emphasis on young adolescents and the research question, purpose and aims. In doing this it has emphasised the interface between my personal and professional journey with this research study. The significance of exploring young adolescents' occupational choices in order to promote occupational justice was seen as pivotal. This is followed with a presentation of a review of pertinent literature.

The literature review, in **chapter two**, identifies occupational choice as a taken for granted construct in occupational therapy and only recently explicitly identified in occupational science. I will show how occupational choice has been conceptualised as a predominantly individual construct with the focus on the outcome of the occupational choice. The way that occupational choice is conceptualised in the model of human occupation (Kielhofner, 2008f) is presented. This is followed with a discussion of research into the occupational choices of persons with schizophrenia (Minato & Zemke, 2004). Thereafter knowledge of occupational choice deduced from Pierce's Occupation by Design (Pierce, 2003b) is discussed. Following this, the implications for occupational choice of conceptualising an occupational perspective on cultural evolution (Bonder, 2007a) is identified. Kirsch's perspective on occupational choice and control is presented with Beagan and Kumas-Tan's view of occupational choice in the social context (Polatajko et al., 2007b, 2007c).

Summary comments made in this section suggest that particular attention is given to the construct of occupational choice, especially as it is significantly positioned in the literature as key to promoting occupational justice. It is advocated that there is a shortage of research into how occupational choice may promote occupational justice. The absence of evidence describing the nature of and influences on occupational choice emerged. This identified opening in the occupational therapy knowledge base together with my interest in young adolescents informed the theoretical basis for the study. The basis for my framework lies in the perspective held of the relationship between



occupational choice and occupation as a form of social action that could promote occupational justice (as an expression of social justice). This standpoint draws on Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu, 1977b, 1990; Jenkins, 1992) to frame the intricacies of social action and thus choice. Based on this theory, together with my knowledge of the history of Lavender Hill.

**Chapter three** introduces the critical ethnographic method applied in this study. I contend that critical ethnography is best suited to explore the nature and influences on the occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill. My position as a critical qualitative researcher concerned with social inequalities and directing my work towards positive social change is explicated.

It describes the invaluable contribution of my prior experience as an occupational therapist practising in Lavender Hill towards the critical perspective adopted in this study. It explains the participatory process of data generation. It offers details on how the participants were encouraged to reveal their perspectives and how participant observation and interviews with significant adults were applied to identify different perspectives. Lastly the iterative process of constructing meaning and data analysis is presented. This led to findings that identified the nature of and influences on the participants' occupational choices.

The findings of this study are presented in **chapter four** of the study. The seven young adolescents who contributed to the study are described. The theme, *Is net so* (It's just like that), captured the hegemonic nature of the occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill. This theme is composed of two categories, namely *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) and *Wies wys* (Be sussed). It was evident that the young adolescents' occupational choices emerged in direct relation to their occupational engagement. Factors within the context emerged as significant in influencing the young adolescents' occupational choices.

**Chapter five** presents the discussion of the findings. The significant influence of factors within the context together with the nature of occupational choice is detailed. Within the context, the factors influencing occupational choice included the young adolescents' experiences of historically predicated patterns of occupations at a community level in Lavender Hill; low educational expectations; prevalent subcultures and subgroups and competition for symbolic status. The nature of occupational choice is identified as enfolded and convoluted. The intricate relationship between the contextual

factors influencing occupational choice and the nature of occupational choice is elaborated upon. The implication of applying this insight into occupational choice to occupational justice and occupational science is explained.

The last chapter of this thesis, **chapter six**, offers a summary of the thesis and concludes this research inquiry. It ends with describing the recommendations for future research.

# **Theoretical Background to the Study: towards a critical perspective on occupational choice**

## **2.1 Introduction**

The following chapter is intended to provide a robust theoretical perspective on the study of occupational choice. It achieves this by offering a critical review of recent literature examining occupational choice.

## **2.2 Critical review of current views of occupational choice in the literature**

My concern with the occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill guided the search for literature defining occupational choice. Five texts (Bonder, 2007a; Kielhofner, 2008a; Minato & Zemke, 2004; Pierce, 2003b; Polatajko et al., 2007b, 2007c) were found to examine the concept of occupational choice. All but one of the texts described theories and occupational therapy practice. This meant that there was only one research study directly investigating occupational choice. This portrayed the dearth of research on occupational choice. Nonetheless, key messages about occupational choice emerged. The following order of presentation of the authors introduces their perspectives on occupational choice and does not show preference for one over another, nor do they follow in chronological order. Firstly, the view of occupational choice in the Model of Human Occupation is explicated (Kielhofner, 2008f). Here

occupational choice was seen as being volitional and dependent on the individual's interaction with the environment (Kielhofner, 2008c). Thereafter, research showing that occupational choice contributes to stress management strategies for persons with schizophrenia is presented (Minato & Zemke, 2004). This is followed by an appraisal of Pierce's view (Pierce, 2003b) of the construct of occupational choice in relation to its application during therapy. Bonder's (Bonder, 2007a) cultural perspective on understanding occupational choices is considered. Lastly, Kirsch, Beagan and Kumas-Tan's perspectives on occupational choice as described in a chapter co-authored with Polatajko is reviewed. Kirsch advances the insight into occupational choice and control. Finally Beagan and Kumas-Tan describe the relationship between occupational choice and social context (Polatajko et al., 2007c).

### **2.2.1 Occupational choice within the Model of Human Occupation** (Kielhofner, 2008f)

Kielhofner (2008c), currently is the only theorist in occupational therapy who explicitly provides a definition of occupational choice. He notes that occupational choices are "deliberate commitments to enter an occupational role, acquire a new habit, or undertake a personal project" (Kielhofner, 2008b, p15). It is perceived as large choices concerning occupations that will become a permanent part of an individual's life. This definition was developed over the past three decades based on occupational therapy practice-based research related to the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) (Kielhofner, 2008a). The MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008c) elaborates that occupational choices occur much less frequently than activity choices. Activity choices are viewed as short-term, deliberate decisions to enter and exit occupational activities (Kielhofner, 2008c). While the definition of occupational choice and especially its comparison to activity choice is consistent with the long-standing debates in defining occupation versus activity (Gray, 1998), the benefits of distinguishing between activity and occupational choice is questioned. Nevertheless, the relationship between choice and the expected length of time that the choice is expected to impact is noteworthy. Assuming that occupational choices have a more significant impact on individuals' lives, it is suggested that these choices are made after a period of careful deliberation (Kielhofner, 2008c). The emphasis in making both activity and occupational choices is on the deliberate nature of these choices. However, it is also proposed that automatic choices exist.

Habits are said to regulate behaviour and that this consists of “acquired tendencies to automatically respond and perform in certain consistent ways in familiar environments or situations” (Kielhofner, 2008d, p 53). It is contended that as long as the environment is experienced as familiar, habits preserve the way of engaging in occupations. In offering this explanation of habitual choices (Kielhofner, 2008d), occupational choices are not included. It is not included since occupational choices are referred to as deliberate choices only. The impact of habits is only theorised in relation to daily patterns of occupations for individuals. Similarly, the influence of roles focuses on its influence on occupations. It is contended that through the process of habituation, the individual has an internalised readiness to demonstrate consistent patterns of habits and roles which matches the characteristics of their routine temporal, physical and social environments. The discussion of the influence of habituation provides insights on how routines and rhythms over time shape occupational patterns, but does not relate to occupational choice. Habituation is identified as a key factor leading individuals to resist change in their patterns of occupations.

The influences on occupational choice are not directly discussed in the MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008a). It may be inferred that the person's narrative, occupational identity and the environment influence occupational choice, since these are said to influence volition in the MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008c). It is postulated that the environment is constituted by its physical spaces, objects, common occupational forms, culture and subcultures and political and economic conditions. Minimal detail on the nature of each of these parts of the environment is offered in the MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008e). Kielhofner (2008e) suggests that the environment contributes to how people choose, organise and enact occupations and that the environment can offer opportunities and choices or impose constraints and demands. The actual impact that the environment has on a person is viewed as dependent on the interaction between the social and physical environment and the characteristics of the person within the environment (ibid). People interact with this environment and its constituent parts so that, if their occupations are to be understood, the environment has to be appreciated in relation to the person's occupational narrative (ibid). Inherent in the explanation offered is that the person would have to make an activity choice or occupational choice.

Overall, it appears that activity or occupational choice is implicitly referred to in the discussion of habituation and the environment, but that occupational choice is not

specifically focused upon in relation to human occupation within the MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008e). Secondly, although the reciprocal and ever present influence of the environment is acknowledged, the perspective of research and practice from the MOHO is still from an individual's perspective (Kielhofner, 2008c) and thus insufficient attention may be given to the influence of the components of the environment.

An important critique related to the Model of Human Occupation is related to the fact that its origins (Kielhofner, 2008f) are in the traditions of the occupational behaviour framework (Reilly, 1969). The views on occupational choice expressed in the MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008c) also featured in the work of earlier occupational behaviour theorists (Webster, 1980; Paulson, 1980). Here the definition of occupational choice referred to a long-term process through which the person developed their skills and abilities, self interests and self evaluation across their life span (Webster, 1980; Paulson, 1980). Based on clinical case studies, it was shown that exposure to opportunities within the environment influence the person's selection, maintenance and development of occupational roles (ibid). This view of choice and consequently the view espoused by the MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008c) places the locus of choice primarily within the person. Occupational choice, as deliberate is seen as a rational decision making process in which the individual pursues existing occupational roles. The perspectives put forward by the occupational behaviour perspective (Reilly, 1969; Webster, 1980; Poulsen, 1980) and MOHO (Kielhofner, 2008c) appears to endorse the maintenance of existing occupational roles and does not challenge the status quo with respect to power structures. This limitation offers another reason why Kielhofner's (2008c) perspective on occupational choice may not be an appropriate for a study, such as this one, which is concerned with occupational justice.

### **2.2.2 Occupational choice of persons with schizophrenia** (Minato & Zemke, 2004)

Minato and Zemke (2004) examined the occupational choices of persons with schizophrenia living in a community in Japan. Occupational choice was approached with the understanding that it referred to the person's choice of daily occupations (ibid). Accepting this, the study investigated the occupations that were stressful and those that reduced the stress of persons with schizophrenia. It advocated that occupational choices resulted in occupations that could be stressful or relaxing. A time-use study was

conducted with 89 participants between the ages of 19 to 64 years old. For one day participants were asked to rate their occupations based on a scale from very stressful to relaxing (Minato & Zemke, 2004). Further interviews about the stress and relaxation on their daily life were conducted with three participants. Requiring participants to categorise their experiences as stressful or relaxing (ibid) constrained the opportunity for participants' narratives to emerge. However, through describing the participants' patterns of participation in occupations in this way, the findings of this study showed that occupational choice contributed to the participants' stress management strategies. The focus of the discussion of the findings was on reducing the stress of persons with schizophrenia, rather than occupational choice per se. It highlighted that the characteristics of the occupations that the participants selected were a significant factor within these strategies. Participants chose to participate in passive occupations that allowed them to feel relaxed and some active occupations where they experienced a measure of stress. The reasons for their selection of occupations related to aspiring towards a healthier state. It was advocated that the types of occupations chosen had an impact on their experience of quality of life and health. It was thus inferred that choosing to participate in particular occupations resulted in a feeling of improved health and the experience of being part of the community or social group (Minato & Zemke, 2004). Although not explicitly stated, it seemed that the authors implied that occupational choices contributed to the way individuals experienced their community membership. It was emphasised that the ability to make appropriate occupational choices may assist people with schizophrenia to remain healthy. Particular attention was drawn to the need to promote personal development through the availability of opportunities which allowed for routine, repetition of occupations. The role of occupational choice in this was not elaborated upon, instead the value of occupational choice was seen as creating a patterned structure to their time-use. However, it was advised that a variety of occupations should be available in the environment so that wider opportunity and thus an increased range of occupations are accessible. This study provided further confirmation that patterns of occupations and occupational choices existed and that time is an important consideration in relation to occupational choice. Through its statement of the value of occupational choice, it acknowledged the significance of this construct. In summary, occupational choice prevailed as a taken for

granted concept compared to the attention and interest directed at the outcome thereof, especially the healthy qualities of participating in occupations.

### **2.2.3 Occupational choice in Occupation by Design** (Pierce, 2003b)

Pierce (2003b) provides an extensive framework based on a synthesis of theory and research on occupation and activity. The framework, called Occupation by Design (Pierce, 2003b) guides the student or novice occupational therapist on how to design the selection of occupations specific to individuals. In doing so, a perspective on occupational choice is presented in relation to how an occupational therapist can contribute to enabling an individual to make occupational choices. Interestingly, while providing this practice framework, it does not explicitly identify that it may be offering an explanation of the mechanisms for occupational choice. The practice framework thus makes an unclaimed contribution to theorising the construct of occupational choice. Implicitly, the potential positive impact of occupational choice is aimed to be optimised when accurately selecting occupations for therapy (Pierce, 2003b). This review does not intend to summarise the full extent of Occupation by Design (Pierce, 2003b). Since an outright discussion or definition of occupational choice is not offered in the framework, the appropriate definitions of the sub-components of the framework have to be discussed in more detail. The points relating to the subjective and contextual dimensions of occupations are discussed. As will become evident below, these dimensions were selected because of their cogency with the construct of occupational choice.

In suggesting how to select occupations, Occupation by Design rests on a view that both occupation and activity are important concepts. “An activity is defined as an idea held in the minds of persons and in their shared cultural language; an activity is a culturally defined and general class of human actions” (Pierce, 2003b, p 5). This is contrasted with an occupation which is seen as:

a specific individual’s personally constructed, non-repeatable experience. That is, an occupation is a subjective event in perceived temporal, spatial and socio-cultural conditions that are unique to that one-time occurrence. An occupation has a shape, a pace, a beginning and an ending, a shared or solitary aspect, a cultural meaning to the person, an infinite number of other perceived



contextual qualities. A person interprets his or her occupations before, during and after they happen (Pierce, 2003b, p 4).

It is implied that both occupation and activities are relevant to occupational choice. Two components, namely, the appeal of occupational experiences and intactness with which it matches the contextual dimensions of the occupation (Pierce, 2003b) are suggested to be particularly important to the design of therapeutic occupations. These dimensions thus influence occupational choice. The appeal of an occupation is perceived to be dependent on the person's subjective experience of participating in an occupation. The subjective dimension of appeal results from the occupational blend of pleasure, productivity and restoration derived from an experience. Pierce (2003b) proposes that these dimensions should be appropriately blended to match the person's needs, given their particular culture and need for balance. Furthermore, she suggests that this subjective experience of appeal always occurs within a natural setting of occupations. This natural setting refers to the contextual dimensions of occupation and contributes to the intactness of the occupation. The spatial, temporal and sociocultural contextual dimensions have to be considered in order to select an occupation that is intact with the contextual dimensions of the occupation. The spatial dimension is said to refer to more than just the physical environment; it includes the physical objects that need to be available or present as barriers and the social meaning of the space to the individual (Pierce, 2003b). Most of the emphasis on the interpretation of the spatial and temporal dimensions is focused on the individual's perspective. The sociocultural dimension of occupation describes that a primary aspect of participating in occupations is their social nature. This would mean that people make occupational choices with the outcomes resulting as their performance as solitary or as co-occupations. Within the social nature, relationships and ties with others, including organisations of people sharing a common goal, influence the occupational choices made (Pierce, 2003a). Applying Bourdieu's (Bourdieu, 1977b) understanding of how culture operates, Pierce (2003a) relates that individuals acquire culture through their immersion in it and create culture through their social actions in a shared life world.

While Pierce's theory for the design of therapeutically powerful occupations is well set out and offers valuable insights into occupational choice, its limitations are threefold. Firstly, despite recognising the value of the sociocultural dimension of the context and an etic perspective (Pierce, 2003a), it places emphasis almost entirely in

understanding the selection of the occupation from the individual's experience. The interpretation of the context from an individual's perspective does not encourage the individual or occupational therapist to question the occupational choices occurring within the context. It is thought that questioning the opportunities and circumstances prevailing in a context is especially important for situations where occupational injustice exists. Secondly, the lack of research specifically on the construct of occupational choice outside the therapeutic milieu to support the claims related to choice of occupations limits the impact that this framework may have on defining occupational choice. It does however add to the basis from which to begin to systematically investigate the construct of occupational choice. Lastly, the framework is designed for the selection of therapeutic occupations. Consideration for the application of this knowledge beyond the therapeutic environment is not offered.

#### **2.2.4 Implications of an occupational perspective on cultural evolution** (Bonder, 2007a)

It has been postulated that cultural evolution provides continuity over time while it also changes (Bonder, 2007a). While theorising an occupational perspective on cultural evolution (ibid), it was suggested that occupational choice may have an influence on the occupations that groups of people engage in. The term occupational choice was used to refer to the way that choice manifested in the patterns of occupations for a group of people over a period of time. Within this perspective, occupational choice was perceived as the kinds of occupations in which individuals engage and their patterns and styles of engagement (ibid). It was suggested that cultural evolution may influence occupational choice and that occupational choice may also influence cultural evolution. The focus in this article was on theorising the relationship between cultural evolution and occupational choices as manifested in patterns of occupations over time. The nature of occupational choice was not discussed.

Describing her theory and applying it to her knowledge of the Mayan villages in Guatemala, Bonder (2007a) explored the occupations that they engaged in. She emphasised that culture was conveyed through speech, communication and action (ibid). It was then learnt through imitation of observed behaviour or occupation. Consequently, she advocated that their choices of occupations were strongly tied to cultural beliefs and values.

In adopting an occupational perspective on cultural evolution (Bonder, 2007a), attention was drawn to the way that actions became habitual for particular groups over time. Bonder (2007a) implied that a relationship existed between cultural evolution and occupational patterns without discussing the latter. Consequently, Bendixon et al's (2006, p4) definition of occupational patterns as the "regular and predicable way of doing which occurs when human beings organise activities and occupations" may offer further insight. The regular and predictable nature of occupational patterns may contribute to the habitual character of cultural evolution as expressed by Bonder (2007a). By highlighting the historical connection associated with cultural evolution, she argued that cultural evolution influences occupational choice. This viewpoint extends Pierce's (2003a) theory of the influence of sociocultural dimensions on occupational choice. Also, by recognising that occupational choice manifests in the chosen patterns of occupations, the possibility of occupational choice having broad societal implications is suggested (Bonder, 2007a). Further to this, it directly appreciates that socio-cultural aspects may influence occupational choice. In this way, Bonder (2007a) adds to the diverse interpretations of occupational choice. It is of concern that this accepted theoretical term is not rigorously debated and defined. Nonetheless, occupational choice as relating to cultural evolution of occupational patterns is a novel concept (Pierce, 2003b).

Habitual actions were not viewed as impermeable to change. Change in patterns of occupations was seen as a probability that depended on complex interactions between the person in terms of their personality and experiences and their culture (Bonder, 2007a). This complex interaction was noted to be of particular importance to the promotion of occupational justice since it influenced the accessibility of opportunities for meaningful and successful occupations (ibid). Through this, the relevance of transcending investigations beyond just describing people's cultures was rendered as important. The role of occupational choice, if any, during the aforementioned interaction was not distilled. Instead it was suggested that the positive and negative consequences of cultural evolution should be explored and that the intended and unintended consequences should be put forward so that further insight into occupation could be generated. Similar to previous authors, Bonder did not identify how this would impact on the understanding of occupational choice. Based on the occupational perspective on cultural evolution (Bonder, 2007a), it is proposed that more can be

understood about occupational choice if cultural patterns of occupations are investigated.

### **2.2.5 Occupational choice from the perspective of Kirsh, Beagan and Kumas-Tan (Polatajko et al., 2007b)**

In keeping with the recognition that occupational choice has an influence on therapeutic occupations, occupational choice was explicitly identified as imperative for occupational therapy (Polatajko et al., 2007b). The short excerpt in this text began to focus some discussion directly on occupational choice through offering the perspectives of Kirsch and then Beagan and Kumas-Tan.

Kirsch (Polatajko et al., 2007b) offered a view of occupational choice and control where the selective and diverse nature of occupational engagement was emphasised as being of importance. Recognition of the selective nature of occupational engagement highlighted the underlying assumption that the right and power to exert preferences existed (Pierce, 2003b). It was asserted that occupational choice involved applying this right and power to select occupations and occupational engagement. Kirsch suggested that the diversity of occupational engagement varied across individuals, groups, communities and cultures and emanated from a set of needs, preferences and values. The implication of this was that the perceptions of choice and control were perceived to be socially and culturally constructed (Pierce, 2003b). Consequently choice and control was proposed to be not only individual, but also organisational, political, social and economic constructs (ibid). Identifying the relationship between occupational choice and occupational engagement, as opposed to occupational performance is noteworthy. However, Kirsch (Pierce, 2003b) does not elaborate fully on this proposition.

Occupational choice and control were acknowledged as important factors for successful occupational therapy practice since they facilitate client-centredness and successful outcomes (Polatajko et al., 2007b). It is also suggested that through creating opportunities to make choices, working partnerships are enhanced and this allows clients to feel more in control (ibid). Lastly, when stigma and occupational injustice exists, choice is said to be compromised. When occupational injustice exists, choices are limited and occupational therapy practice and research can potentially identify and remove barriers in order to improve conditions (Pierce, 2003b).

Beagan and Kumas-Tan emphasised that a relationship exists between occupational choice and the social context. They noted that participation and non-participation in specific occupations assist in constructing the social environment and that this in turn dictates the appropriateness of particular occupations. It was suggested that participation in differing occupations produces social identity just as social identity influences individuals participation in occupations. This view could be synchronized with the deductions made from the occupational perspective on cultural evolution offered by Bonder (Bonder, 2007a). Further to this, it was recognised that the social context promotes some choices and hinders others (Polatajko et al., 2007c). The meaning of occupations within the social context was perceived to be shaped by historical influences, with social class viewed as an influence on collective meanings. The significance of this was suggested to be that over time, when you rarely see members of your social group participating in particular occupations, those occupations may take on meanings of exclusively belonging to others (Pierce, 2003b). This was said to possibly influence occupational choice.

The conceivable claims made by Kirsch, Beagan and Kumas-Tan are not limited to the individual making an occupational choice. The claims begin to offer a view of the interface between an individual and social interpretation of occupational choice. This valuable contribution offers a perspective that is not substantiated by research into the construct of occupational choice. Also, the authors appear to refer to choice and occupational choice synonymously. This highlights the need to delineate the nature of occupational choice succinctly.

## **2.2.6 Conclusion**

This section has highlighted that theorists assume that a relationship exists between occupation and occupational choice. Occupational choice is often referred to during discussion of occupation, however little research or even discussion has centred attention on the nature of occupational choice. The particular nature of the relationships between occupation and occupational choice was limited to recognising that the patterns of occupations could be influenced by occupational choices. However how this occurred and the details of the relationships were not explained. Moreover, the literature emphasised the deliberate, rational nature of occupational choice, assuming an individual perspective. Thus identifying the nature of occupational choice in terms of

the relationship between occupational patterns at a community level and occupational choice remains to be explored. The critical review of the literature has also shown that occupational choice has mainly been theorised for its application to clinical settings. This has meant that little consideration has been given to the nature of occupational choice as it occurs outside of the therapeutic application where situations where occupational injustice exists. Except in the one instance (Polatajko et al., 2007b), the interpretation of occupation is limited to be interpreted as applied to occupational performance rather than occupational engagement. The assertion that a limitation of occupational choice occurs in instances of occupational injustice has to be further explored.

While plausible theories of occupational choice could be deduced from the literature, this critical review revealed a lack of empirical examination into the construct of occupational choice. The danger of not exploring occupational choice empirically is that the profession assumes that similar understandings are shared and that the diversity of interpretations of occupational choice are not considered prior to therapeutic application of the concept. The following section introduces the theoretical framework that guides the current study in exploring occupational choice.

## **2.3 An occupational perspective on choice**

The above critical review of the literature highlighted that occupation and occupational choice are related. The view put forward by Kirsh, Beagan and Kumas-Tan (Polatajko et al., 2007b, 2007c) was that occupational choice and occupational engagement are related. Furthermore, it was shown that the diverse definitions of occupation influence the way that occupation applies to constructs such as occupational justice (Molineux, 2010), and occupational choice. Appreciating that the perspectives on occupation may influence theorising about occupational choice, the following section discusses the possible relationship between occupational engagement and occupational choice. In doing so, occupational performance is contrasted with occupational engagement.

### **2.3.1 The link between occupational engagement, performance and choice**

In the discussion below, the focus on participation in occupations is presented as a basis from which to begin to examine occupational choice. The usefulness of the constructs of

occupational engagement and performance are explicated. Appreciating the value of these constructs, a perspective from which to explore occupational choice is then advanced.

Health, in terms of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion is seen as “a resource for everyday living” (World Health Organisation, 1986, p 1). Involvement in occupations is fundamental to the achievement of health (Wilcock, 1998a). If occupational therapists are to work not only for health through alleviating impairments, but also to promote community development, a sustainable ecology and social justice (Wilcock, 1998b) a broader perspective on occupation should be adopted (Wilcock & Hocking, 2004). Within the broader, public health perspective of occupation, diverse opportunities to participate in occupations is deemed of importance (Pierce, 2003b). Individuals and groups in society should be able to select their participation in occupations in society (Pierce, 2003b). Occupational choice would thus relate to opportunities to participate in society. The existence of the opportunity to participate in occupations, does not mean that people will perform all occupations. Here, the distinction between occupational performance and occupational engagement is deemed relevant.

A distinction between occupational performance and occupational engagement has been proposed as valuable (Polatajko et al., 2007a). Occupational engagement has been argued to be a matter of having occupations, whereas occupational performance refers to the performing or doing of occupations (Polatajko et al., 2007d). Occupational performance is defined as “the actual execution or carrying out of an occupation” (Polatajko et al., 2008b, p 26). In contrast, having or engaging in an occupation is to “involve oneself or become occupied; (to) participate”(Polatajko et al., 2008b, p 26). Occupational engagement is influenced by the range of occupations that a person has access to. Occupational engagement includes, but is not limited to, occupational performance (ibid). Thus, although a person may have access to opportunities to engage in occupations, they may not necessarily perform them (ibid). Similarly, it is suggested here that, applied to occupational choice, a person may have access to many opportunities, but may not make occupational choices reflecting the opportunities. Furthermore both occupational performance and engagement may be influenced by the underlying occupational determinants such as the existing institutional policies, technological advancements, political systems and economic models (Wilcock, 1998a).

It is assumed here that occupational choice occurs prior to occupational performance and occupational engagement. Thus, for groups, focusing on occupational choice in relation to occupational engagement may lead to the examination of what occupations groups of people are engaged in. For example, rather than focusing only on what young adolescents are currently doing in Lavender Hill, that is what occupations they are actually performing, one could investigate what they are and could potentially be participating in. In terms of occupational choice this would mean not just examining what choices they are making, but asking why they may be engaging in these and identifying what they are not doing. This adds a critical consideration to the examination of their occupational choices while acknowledging the relation to occupational engagement. The reasons for performing the occupations that they do could be explored. By looking at the broad range of occupations across time it will enable an extensive appreciation of the range and impact of occupational choice. Consequently, it is assumed that occupational choice may contribute to the understanding of the relationships between occupational engagement, occupational performance and possibly even occupational justice.

Minato (Minato & Zemke, 2004) showed that occupational choices may be deduced from the occupations engaged in. Thus asking individuals about their occupations may lead to discussions about their occupational choices. Given that occupations are shaped by underlying determinants (Wilcock, 1998a), it is deduced that occupational choices may also be influenced by these. Examining and comparing the occupational choices of and between groups within a population may highlight inequalities between groups. Addressing the inequalities in occupational choice requires that the influence of the underlying occupational determinants is considered. Also, the relationship between the underlying occupational determinants and a group's patterns of occupational engagement may reveal more about a group's occupational choices. Given that diversity and inequality of access to resources exists between groups in South Africa, the unequal access between different groups may mean that the underlying occupational determinants shape the patterns of occupational engagement and through this shapes occupational choice. It is suggested that exploring the patterns of occupational choice and occupational engagement of different groups in South Africa could generate insight into practice here. This study pioneers with this suggestion by examining the occupational choices of a group in South Africa. More specifically, it



explores the occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill who are at risk of occupational injustice.

### **2.3.2 Perspective of young adolescents' occupations**

Research with children has been influenced by the perspective that the stage of human development is an important concept (Bezuidenhout, 2003; Dawes & Donald, 2000) in children's occupations (Case-Smith, 2005). Research from clinical occupational therapy practice drew attention to the social construction of childhood occupations (Lawlor, 2003b) where human development is seen as open to negotiation (Morss, 1996). Mimicking the trend in developmental psychology, the social constructionist view of developmental psychology was suggested as needing to emerge in occupational therapy (Lawlor, 2003b). A social constructionist view of developmental psychology emphasises that human life is constructed through daily social processes such as interaction, language and sharing of values based on historically and culturally specific knowledge (De LaRey, Duncan, Sheffer, & van Niekerk, 1997; Harre, 1986). Consequently, the early stages of development should not simply be seen as steps towards maturity, rather the social activity of children is subject to moral orders located in the sociocultural context (Morss, 1996). As a result, children's capacities and the opportunities to show these capacities are bound to their sociocultural context (De LaRey, Duncan, Sheffer, & van Niekerk, 1997).

Research highlighting the social construction of occupations has emerged (Humphry, 2005). Investigating the development of childhood occupations, the Processes Transforming Occupations (PTO) model was developed (ibid). Based on research with toddlers and their teachers, it described how the development of occupations and performance is simultaneously influenced by societal, social and individual factors. It was proposed that children's experiences and participation in occupations is mediated through transformation influenced by the aforementioned levels. It is possible that occupational choice may contribute to the transformation as a mediating factor, however this was not explored by Humphry (2005). While the social constructionist approach has been applied to broaden the perspective on the development of children's occupations, this approach has some limitations. Since a social constructionist approach generally has an individualistic bias that regards collective change as a result of individual ones (Helga, 2000), it may mean that

occupations within the PTO could be perceived in a similar way. However, another valuable dimension of the PTO is that occupation is seen as transactional within it (Dickie, Cutchin, & Humphry, 2006; Humphry, 2005). Within this an individual's social agency is acknowledged as related to the notion that multiple interpretations of a situation are possible and that this occurs in different contexts. This challenges the notions that biological immaturity determines social relations in children (Prout & James, 1990). This is further elaborated upon in the understanding of context as explained below.

### **2.3.3 Occupational engagement and context**

Access to occupations is dependent on the environment. The impact of access to the environment has been discussed in relation to the development of children (Poulsen & Ziviani, 2006). The influence of psychological theories of the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1986) was especially evident in occupational therapy literature (Stark, 2005). Factors within the environment influencing an individual child's development were related to person factors, process factors, contexts and time (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Here the person factors referred to inherent psychological factors such as cognition; process factors, the forms of interaction that may occur such as those interactions within the contexts of the families and neighbourhoods that children were in and the time was the maturational changes that over time. The stage of development is usually judged by occupational therapists according to the person's physical characteristics; emotional, cognitive and intellectual ability (Case-Smith, 2005; Christiansen, Baum, & Bass-Haugen, 2005). Although the environment's influence on facilitating the development of these abilities was recognised, the focus remained on measuring children against expected developmental milestones. For example, drawing on psychological theoretical constructions of the environment, Lavender Hill was categorised as socially disorganised (Mapham, Lawless, Abbas, Ross-Thompson, & Duncan, 2004). The risk-taking behaviour of older adolescent boys in Lavender Hill was also identified to be as a consequence of the lack of facilities and constant exposure to risk-taking activities in their environment (Carrier, Dutton, & Lee, 2002). Recently, there have been diverse views on the environment that surpasses the binary nature of the relationship between occupations and the environment. The influence of the

occupations within the PTO could be perceived in a similar way. However, another valuable dimension of the PTO is that occupation is seen as transactional within it (Dickie, Cutchin, & Humphry, 2006; Humphry, 2005). Within this an individual's social agency is acknowledged as related to the notion that multiple interpretations of a situation are possible and that this occurs in different contexts. This challenges the notions that biological immaturity determines social relations in children (Prout & James, 1990). This is further elaborated upon in the understanding of context as explained below.

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geography and sociology of the environment has received attention (O'Brien, Dyck, Caron, & Mortenson, 2002).

Context is an inclusive term that incorporates the present status of the immediate physical, social and cultural environment together with the socio-political histories and associated socio-emotional factors. The plurality of contexts was highlighted by Whiteford (2010) when she asserted that occupation is always simultaneously embedded in several distinct contexts. The family, community, economic and political contexts were identified to influence occupational engagement (ibid). The influence of power, temporality, situatedness and ideological viewpoints as context have also been put forward (Whiteford, Townsend, & Hocking, 2000). It is contended here that occupational choice has to be examined relative to the complexity of the context by surpassing the binary perspectives.

Recognising that occupational engagement is a form of social action that occurs in multiple contexts leads to a perspective that can transcend the duality between person and environment (Dickie, Cutchin, & Humphry, 2006). This perspective re-theorised occupation from a less individualised orientation (ibid). Dickie, Cutchin and Humphry (2006) asserted that drawing on Dewey and Bourdieu's action theories, re-orientates occupation to be seen as transactional. Here occupational engagement involves the co-construction of context and occupational engagement through the nature of these relationships (Cutchin, Aldrich, Baillard, & Coppola, 2008). Occupation is seen as the relational glue between the person and their environment (ibid). It is proposed that occupational choice, as a mediating factor may contribute to the relationship between the person and the environment. Bourdieu's theory of social practice (Bourdieu, 1977b, 1990) can assist in grasping how this may be possible.

Bourdieu (1977b) acknowledged the importance of both the individual and the society in shaping human action and creating social structure. He explained that society shapes individuals through socialisation, but that the continuity of society depends on the individual's actions (Bourdieu, 1990). Since occupations are forms of social action (Cutchin, Aldrich, Baillard, & Coppola, 2008), it is asserted that the patterns of occupations over time contribute to the continuity of society. In the current study it is contended that occupational choice gives rise to occupations, thus it is possible that occupational choices over time result in occupations that contribute to the continuity of society. Bourdieu (1977) identified three interrelated concepts, namely habitus, capital

and social field which have to be grasped in order to understand how choices are viewed as social practice (Jenkins, 1992). These are introduced below while noting their value to conceptualising occupational choice.

Bourdieu strongly criticised rational choice theory (Reed-Danahay, 2005). The intention here is not to contribute to the debate of the conceptualisation of choice. Rather, it is accepted that choice exists and that its existence transcends functioning at a rational level. Instead choice is viewed with respect to the relationship between social structure and humans as agents (Bourdieu, 1977a, 1990). Bourdieu (1990) proposed that choices are made under the constraints of habitus and the conditions of social fields. Habitus refers to a semi-conscious orientation that humans have to the world (Jenkins, 1992). This orientation is shaped by the context and inclines people to act in particular ways (Bourdieu, 1990). This implies that particular choices are made within a particular context. Applied to young adolescents in Lavender Hill, it means that they may have developed particular orientations or dispositions that influence their occupational engagement and incline them to make particular occupational choices. Habitus emerges from embodied history that is internalised as second nature and is active as the whole past of which it is a product (ibid). People's dispositions generate actions that are regular, but not consciously governed by rules; actions are governed by the social positions that people hold. This is likened to the idiosyncratic, yet patterned nature of occupation since occupations are influenced by habits, but also contribute to the formation of habits (Cutchin, Aldrich, Baillard, & Coppola, 2008). Furthermore, it is advocated that habitus is not individual, but is shared by a collective holding similar positions (Bourdieu, 1990), for example young adolescents in the same social class in Lavender Hill. The past, as part of habitus, functions as accumulated capital and produces history based in history (ibid). This may contribute to the consistency of occupational engagement for particular groups across history since habitus is transposable and generative.

Bourdieu (1977b) recognised that different groups and generations of people accumulate different capital and have diverse theories of how the world works. Forms and networks of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital structure the social fields where actions take place (Pierce, 2003b). Each social field holds expectations and aspirations associated with its habitus and capital (Pierce, 2003b). Capital refers to objectively valued resources within a particular social field. Capital is accumulated and

converted by those in domination (Bourdieu, 1990). This means that capital contributes to the generation of action within a field. Capital contributes to the social positions that a person holds in relation to the social positions of others within the social field and across social fields (Bourdieu, 1990). The implication here is that a person's social positions in a field may shape the occupational choices that they make. Appreciating the possible influence of social positions on occupational choice informs the approach to exploring the occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill in this study. It will draw attention to occupational choice in relation to the habitus, capital and social field, rather than just describing what occupational choices are made.

The concepts of habitus, capital and social field may also hold implications for occupational choice when othering of occupations occurs. Beagan and Kumas-Tan highlighted that othering of occupations can occur as a result of feelings that certain occupations do not belong to a particular group (Polatajko et al., 2007c). It is suggested here that members of a particular group may make occupational choices based on their shared habitus and in the process be marginalised or excluded from particular occupations. The need to understand how social marginalisation impacts on occupational phenomena has previously been identified by Whiteford (2000). This is pertinent in Lavender Hill where significant sets of South African legislature, such as the Children's Act ("Children's Act Amendment Bill 19", 2007), provides a framework for advocating for children's rights, however the existing social and economic reality continues to challenge the implementation thereof. Insight into the impact of social marginalisation on young adolescents' occupational choice in Lavender Hill may be of value in promoting occupational justice for this group.

#### **2.3.4 Occupational choice and occupational justice**

An enabling approach to occupational justice is premised on the understanding that humans choose to engage in occupations (Townsend & Wilcock, 2004b). In putting forward the beliefs and principles of occupational justice, it was recognised that: "humans participate as autonomous, yet interdependent agents in their social contexts" and that "empowerment depends on enabling choice and control in occupational participation" (Townsend & Wilcock, 2004b, p79). The beliefs and principles blend together the perspective that people are autonomous, yet influenced by their social contexts and that, through occupations within these contexts, they should be able to

make choices and exert a sense of control (ibid). Choices include making decisions about and between occupations (ibid). In so doing, occupational justice emphasises the individual's choice in accepting opportunities and resources that support their enablement and empowerment (Townsend & Whiteford, 2004). Also, the underlying assumption associated with the aforementioned occupational justice belief, is that the right and power to exert preferences exists and that perceptions of choice and control are influenced by social and cultural dimensions (Townsend & Wilcock, 2004a). This is particularly significant for marginalised groups since their rights and powers to exert preferences related to occupations may not exist and thus they risk the experience of occupational injustice. Occupational injustice may thus arise from a lack of occupational choice; as such understanding more about this may inform how to promote occupational justice.

### **2.3.5 Preliminary conclusions on occupational choice**

The distinctions made in the previous section are subtle, yet they are critical to the construction of occupational choice. It is asserted that the assumed position on occupational choice is shaped by the view on occupational engagement, the perspectives on children's occupations, context and occupational justice in relation to occupational choice. The exploration of the literature on occupational choice highlighted important assumptions about occupational choice. These included that occupational choice should be viewed in relation to occupations (Minato & Zemke, 2004), and appreciating the transactional nature of occupation (Dickie, Cutchin, & Humphry, 2006) and more broadly occupational engagement. Further to this the volitional aspects (Kielhofner, 2008f); the relationships with cultural evolution of occupational patterns (Bonder, 2007a) and the relationship of occupational choice with control and social context (Polatajko et al., 2007b, 2007c) were emphasised. The importance of the context for accessing opportunities and through this possibly influencing occupational choice was also noted. Reflection upon the limitations of these assumptions highlighted further areas for expansion on the concept of occupational choice.

It was most noticeable that the nature of and influences on occupational choices was not independently examined. It is contended that investigating occupational choice may contribute to developing its definition. It has been suggested that advancing multiple definitions of concepts enhances the richness of a discipline, such as

occupational science, by offering finer points on concepts (Pierce, 2009). The positions of occupational choice as shaped by the perspectives on occupational engagement, context and occupational justice have been outlined above. These perspectives informed the decision to explore occupational choice through applying critical ethnography.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has offered insight into the theoretical perspective informing this study. It has argued that young adolescents living in Lavender Hill are part of a marginalised group whose occupational choices have not been interrogated. It noted that occupational choice, from a theoretical standpoint needs to be investigated in relation to realities such as social marginalisation as it lends itself to a broader interpretation of the construct. Critical ethnography was described as a methodology that complements this pursuit. The following chapter describes how this methodology was applied.



# Method of Inquiry

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the way the critical ethnographic method of inquiry was applied to this study. The first section of this chapter includes a description of the merits of applying critical ethnography as the selected method of inquiry. Secondly the theoretical nuance of conducting research with children consistent with the theoretical standpoint adopted is elaborated upon. Thereafter it describes what was learnt through practising occupational therapy among young adolescents in Lavender Hill. It explicates the way that this influenced my critical perspective in this study. The next section explains the participatory data generation process applied in this study. It begins by describing the ethical procedures followed in order to obtain permission to conduct the current critical ethnography. Thereafter the sample selection and methods of data gathering are fully explained. It is contended that the process, procedures and integrity with which data was generated assured the trustworthiness and credibility of the research. The last section describes the analysis of the data gathered.

## 3.2 Critical Ethnography

In this next section I argue for the merits of applying the critical ethnographic method to gain insight into the occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill. This will be achieved by describing how a critical ethnographic approach lends itself to exploring the nature of and influences on occupational choice. Since critical ethnography is embedded in ethnographic research, the discussion begins with the latter.

Ethnography carries different meanings that have evolved through absorbing and reworking the contested viewpoints critiquing it (Mannan, 1995). In brief, ethnography refers to forms of social research that have four basic features in common. These are:

- exploring the features of social phenomena rather than testing hypotheses about them
- working with data that has not been coded
- investigating a small number of cases in detail
- Analysing data that involves interpretations of the meanings and functions of human actions (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998).

It is asserted that the features of occupational choice can be researched through applying ethnography. Since ethnography allows the researcher to investigate the peculiarities of a specific context (Silverman, 2006), its application holds the potential to reveal the distinct nature of and influences on the occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill. An ethnographic study informed by a postmodern ideological perspective involves adopting a descriptive rather than predictive stance while focusing on marginalised voices (Rosenau, 1992). It is advocated that young adolescents living in Lavender Hill are marginalised within South African society and that an ethnographic study conducted with them would allow for their voices to be heard.

When examining concepts such as occupational choice, the researcher sets out to explore the diverse perspectives that are held. Underlying this is the assumption that many variations or interpretations of this perspective are possible (Rosenau, 1992). This complements the view that occupational choice may be peculiar to the context, but that different perspectives could be explored. With acknowledgement of the diverse perspectives this study focuses on the views of a group of young adolescents living in Lavender Hill. However, since the study is concerned with occupational choice as it may contribute to promoting occupational justice, it intends to extend beyond a descriptive ethnography to become a critical ethnography.

Critical ethnography explores the culture, community and everyday circumstances of participants with the goal of seeing what is and what could be (Thomas, 1993). It involves seeking not only to uncover sociocultural knowledge about a group, but also patterns suggesting social injustice. Occupational injustice is a form of social injustice

(Townsend & Wilcock, 2004b); it thus follows that critical ethnography could reveal patterns of occupational engagement or occupational choice leading to the occupational injustice experienced by young adolescents in Lavender Hill. Critical ethnography has the potential to raise consciousness about the injustice, inequalities and hegemonies of social life (Korth, 2002). Raising consciousness about the nature of occupational choice for young adolescents in Lavender Hill would assist in exploring how to confront the inequalities experienced by them. Critical researchers share a value orientation in that they are concerned with social inequalities and direct their work towards positive social change (Carspecken, 1996).

Extending from critical social theory, critical ethnography draws on pragmatic models of meaning to epistemological issues; adopts a critical-realist ontology and places power as significant contributor to its epistemology (Carspecken, 1999). Critical realist thinking seeks to understand the relationship of culture, such as that of the young adolescents in Lavender Hill, to the social structures in which they operate. It is believed that elements of this relationship largely escape the awareness of actors while influencing how they act (Georgiou & Carspecken, 2002). Further to this, reality is seen as more than the constructed knowledge of a group. Reality should be understood through the pragmatics of communication (ibid). Critical realism is compatible with a wide range of research methods, but suggests that particular choices should depend on the nature of the subject of the study and what needs to be learnt about it. The research setting is characterised by tacit understanding shared by actors and makes all actions possible (Carspecken, 1996). Through applying intensive research designs, critical realists seek out substantial relations of connections and situate practices within wider contexts, illuminating part-whole relationships (Sayer, 2000). Although critical ethnography does not prescribe particular techniques for data collection, it emphasises the importance of the researcher's orientation (Thomas, 1993). An intensive approach begins with the view of the research participants (Sayer, 2000). This is pivotal since social (ibid) and arguably occupational phenomena such as occupational choice are dependent on the social actors' conceptions of them. The following section discusses the orientation to research with children before proceeding to introduce the techniques for data gathering.

The application of the critical approach and priority attention given to the research participants' voices will be described in chapter three.

(Townsend & Wilcock, 2004b); it thus follows that critical ethnography could reveal patterns of occupational engagement or occupational choice leading to the occupational injustice experienced by young adolescents in Lavender Hill. Critical ethnography has the potential to raise consciousness about the injustice, inequalities and hegemonies of social life (Korth, 2002). Raising consciousness about the nature of occupational choice for young adolescents in Lavender Hill would assist in exploring how to confront the inequalities experienced by them. Critical researchers share a value orientation in that they are concerned with social inequalities and direct their work towards positive social change (Carspecken, 1996).

Extending from critical social theory, critical ethnography draws on pragmatic models of meaning to epistemological issues; adopts a critical-realist ontology and places power as significant contributor to its epistemology (Carspecken, 1999). Critical realist thinking seeks to understand the relationship of culture, such as that of the young adolescents in Lavender Hill, to the social structures in which they operate. It is believed that elements of this relationship largely escape the awareness of actors while influencing how they act (Georgiou & Carspecken, 2002). Further to this, reality is seen as more than the constructed knowledge of a group. Reality should be understood through the pragmatics of communication (*ibid*). Critical realism is compatible with a wide range of research methods, but suggests that particular choices should depend on the nature of the subject of the study and what needs to be learnt about it. The research setting is characterised by tacit understanding shared by actors and makes all actions possible (Carspecken, 1996). Through applying intensive research designs, critical realists seek out substantial relations of connections and situate practices within wider contexts, illuminating part-whole relationships (Sayer, 2000). Although critical ethnography does not prescribe particular techniques for data collection, it emphasises the importance of the researcher's orientation (Thomas, 1993). An intensive approach begins with the view of the research participants (Sayer, 2000). This is pivotal since social (*ibid*) and arguably occupational phenomena such as occupational choice are dependent on the social actors' conceptions of them. The following section discusses the orientation to research with children before proceeding to introduce the techniques for data gathering.

The application of the critical approach and priority attention given to the research participants' voices will be described in chapter three.

### **3.2.1 Conducting research with children**

From a human development perspective, young adolescents are viewed as children. Theoretical orientations to children's position during and in research problematises aspects associated with this viewpoint. The following section begins by discussing the standing of the adult researcher in relation to children. This leads to considerations that have to be made when a critical approach is taken on childhood. Issues related to power and representation are introduced in relation to the manner in which children's social participation is engendered within the current research.

O'Kane (2001) warns that traditionally children's voices have been marginalised and thus adult researchers need to actively work towards breaking down the power imbalance between adults and children. Subsequently, two significant themes emerge during research with children (Christensen, 2004). The first is that the research process is viewed as part of a dialogue with children. This dialogue is achieved through entering into children's cultures of communication (*ibid*). The second theme follows on from this and implies that the adult researcher has to become sensitive and attuned to the manner in which children communicate (*ibid*). These themes are elaborated upon below.

To begin to understand the broader framework of children's thinking, the researcher has to reflect upon and understand the way that they conceptualise and make sense of, develop, apply and understand the social and cultural world. For example, one strategy may be to make use of children's vocabulary and formulations during data collection. This requires that the researcher reflects on and attempts to understand how children respond to the data collection and overall research. The adult researcher, working with children has to consider the nature of the research practices in terms of the extent to which they are reflective of and in line with the children's everyday experiences and ways of communicating and representing the data in their everyday life (Christensen, 2004). It is argued that power is not only embedded in the category 'adult' or 'child' but in the process of doing research. Conducting research 'with', rather than 'on' children challenges the adult researcher to problematise their adult and theoretical perspectives of children (Greig & Taylor, 1999). This connects children's representation in the research to possibilities for promoting their broader social participation.

In order to promote children's social participation, it has been argued that research shifts from viewing children as objects in research to seeing them as subjects in research (Christensen & James, 2001). It is suggested that this should be further extended from children being subjects to being participants in the research. In terms of the relationship with children as participants, the adult researcher needs to acknowledge the children's significant contribution as social and cultural actors. This implies, for example, being sensitised to and aware of the rules that they apply during their interaction and to respect and apply this during the design and implementation of the study. Particularly when the study aims to understand phenomena that could inform social action, then the participants' cultural rules have to govern and be used to nurture the relationships during the data collection process. This means that during the data collection process, the participants' agency should be encouraged. This is important since the theory and methods of research are intricately connected (Graue & Walsh, 1998a). The potential that the position of an adult researcher could overshadow the participant's position and subsequent interpretations as a child was an important consideration. This could be dealt with by employing participatory data gathering methods (Graue & Walsh, 1998b). Photovoice methods is an example of a strategy that promotes participation and advocacy in research with youth (Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart, Buthelezi, & De Lange, 2005). This is elaborated upon in the next section.

### **3.2.2 Methods of data generation**

The methods of data generation within critical ethnography, like critical realism, has to allow the researcher to enter into the research setting. The way that this is achieved should be such that there is a two-way movement between them or a "fusing of horizons" (Sayer, 2000, p 17) of listener and speaker, researcher and participant. It is suggested that data is generated from various sources and using various methods (Carspecken, 1996). The task of the researcher is to identify the best sources that bear most directly on the topic (Thomas, 1993). These sources are those who would have the most insider knowledge on the topic. The next section describes the methods that were selected to gain information from young adolescents who participated in this study. It is advocated that young adolescents making occupational choices would be the best authority on their occupational choices in this study. Data generation is applied as a broad term which includes sample selection and data gathering. Thus the section begins

by describing the approach to sample selection and then the data gathering methods. The methods for data gathering include photovoice and photo-elicitation interviews and participant observation. Since interviews form a significant part of the research process, the approach to interviewing is elaborated upon.

### *3.2.2.1 Sample Selection*

In ethnography, sample selection is required since the researcher cannot record everything that occurs. It is argued that all selection and sampling procedures are purposive unless they apply a haphazard means of selecting data sources (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Ethnographers use a series of sampling strategies as their research is often open-ended and exploratory. Criterion-based selection is applied to identify the sample as the study unfolds and it becomes clear what aspects require further exploration (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). A variety of sample selection strategies can be applied in conjunction with criterion-based selection during data generation. Initial criteria can be defined in terms of the knowledge of the focus and population of the study (Carspecken, 1996). Sequential and progressive application of network sampling is a strategy whereby a preceding participant names successive participants (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The sample is selected based on participant referrals. It allows for individuals to be accessed based on the knowledge of the groups that they are aligned with (ibid). During network sampling, the variation of the criteria may be based on comparisons across dimensions of the sample (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The ongoing nature of selecting the sample means that the sample can continue to be selected during, and informed by, data generation.

### *3.2.2.2 Photovoice and photo-elicitation*

This section argues for the use of visual images as a source of data in qualitative research and then describes the application of photovoice and photo-elicitation methods for data gathering. It is advocated that these methods are appropriate for gathering data with young adolescents in Lavender Hill.

Visual images present a powerful collection of techniques to access and gain insight into people's lives and environments (Prosser, 1998b). Historically, images have been present in sociology and anthropology in the production of visual records; visual documents produced by those being studied and more recently as collaborative efforts with social actors to produce images as representations (Banks, Winter 1995).

However, image-based research has played a minor role in qualitative research, with textual data being given preference (Prosser, 1998a). This is also true for research in occupational therapy and occupational science.

As qualitative research has shifted to understanding social life through the way that people have constructed ideas about it, the role of the images associated with these constructions have become more prominent (Rose, 2001). Similarly, as the constructs associated with occupations are explored, visual data may be found to be invaluable (Pierce, 2005). Visual images produced by children can provide provocative representations of childhood (Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart, Buthelezi, & De Lange, 2005) which challenge the usual 'innocence' associated with childhood. Visual research enables a situatedness that embeds the sociological subjects in context, facilitating a deepened engagement with the social world (Halford & Knowles, 2005). Thus images interpret the world and people, and young adolescents in Lavender Hill are exposed to images daily. For example, through media such as television, advertising billboards, magazines, videos or computer graphics young adolescents read and interpret messages.

Visual images allow for communication of both the physical and emotional worlds. The dynamic nature of living and social interaction can be represented using images. The messages communicated through the visual data influence both the viewer and those captured by and in the image. It has the potential of offering marginalised groups a voice to advocate for appropriate policies or services (Ewald & Lightfoot; Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart, Buthelezi, & De Lange, 2005; Mitchell & Walsh, 2004; Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004). The visual image can be used as primary data or as an adjunct to support textual data. The emphasis shifts between what images are captured to how the image is captured and what the outcome of this is. This is useful in the current study as it provides an avenue with which to engage participants to discuss their interpretations of their occupational choices without interfering with these. It would allow for exploration of both what was engaged in, and through discussion about how the photos were taken, how this occurred can be investigated.

Photovoice methods refers to methods where cameras are used as a voice to communicate issues (International Visual Methodologies for Social Change Project, 2009). Photovoice methods are participatory-action research methods which draw on critical consciousness-raising and feminist theory (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison,



Bell, & Pestronk, 2004) to facilitate participation. It allows people to define for themselves what is worth remembering. Thus participants are able to define and select what they represent in their photos. By drawing on Freire's concept of education for critical consciousness, photography is used to apply the principle of reflecting upon the community (ibid). Through a facilitated, self generated process of producing photos, groups such as young adolescents in Lavender Hill and communities could reveal the social and political realities affecting their lives. Feminist theory is characterised in photovoice methods through its appreciation of the value that is assigned to the subjective experiences of women, but also the way that power influences interaction (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004).

When participatory, photovoice methods are implemented during work with children, they respect diversity and complexity, attempt to understand and enhance local capabilities and encourage interactive dialogue and analysis (O'Kane, 2001). Researchers have applied photovoice methods in a multi-layered approach involving doing photovoice and reaping the benefits from this as social commentary (Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007). This entailed working with children to facilitate the production of the photos and reading the photographs for what they can say about the matters of interest. Children are able to produce rich photographic images representing what they want to communicate. It is suggested that clear production prompts (International Visual Methodologies for Social Change Project, 2009; Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart, Buthelezi, & De Lange, 2005) for their photos are discussed with them. They should then be given simple point-and-shoot disposable or inexpensive cameras (Wang, 1999) to voice their ideas.

The production prompts direct the participants with regards to what is expected of them (Mitchell, 2008). For example the prompts have evoked images of feeling strong and not so strong and stigma as experienced by adolescents in rural South Africa (Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007). It is advised that prompts are kept simple and focused (International Visual Methodologies for Social Change Project). The prompt(s) are introduced to the participants and they are asked to capture images in response to these. The length of time allocated for the production of the photographs is negotiated between the researcher and participants. Previous researchers have allocated between forty five minutes (Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart, Buthelezi, & De Lange, 2005) to weeks (Ewald & Lightfoot, 2001a) depending on the subject and process being

followed. The process of producing the photos in a way that allows for the participants' agency is deemed of utmost importance (International Visual Methodologies for Social Change Project, 2009). It is acknowledged that some of the images may be taken with the intention of being provocative (*ibid*). Nonetheless the reading of these photographs allows for a critical reflection of the intent and meaning of the messages being communicated (Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007). Giving children cameras involves an aspect of teaching them how to produce photos that communicate what they want to (Ewald & Lightfoot, 2001b). This literacy in producing and reading the photographs takes time to develop and thus requires time and patience within the research process. It is also communicated that whatever images are produced can offer valuable insight into the children's lives. Many participants in photovoice projects are novice, first-time photographers, but are able to produce rich data (Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007). It is also possible that each individual participant has their own camera or that a camera is shared within a group (International Visual Methodologies for Social Change Project, 2009). When instructing participants to capture their images. They should be encouraged to take note of who took the photo and why they took it (*ibid*).

Once the participants have taken their photographs, the researcher collects and develops these for discussion with participants. Participants should be given the opportunity to view their collection of photographs. When the research is exploratory, photo-elicitation can be employed so that the photographs captured through photovoice form a significant part of the interview (Mitchell, 2008). It is argued that the use of photographs during interviews allows for fuller explanations and for flow between interviews in a way that solely verbal interviews do not (Mitchell, 2008). This is particularly important for young adolescents, especially those marginalised such as young adolescents in Lavender Hill who, for a variety of reasons may be reticent to express themselves. A further advantage is that remembering is partly magnified by the quality of the photograph itself. Photographs "appear to capture the impossible: a person gone; an event past. That extraordinary sense of seeming to retrieve something that has disappeared belongs to the photograph and it leads to deep and interesting talk" (Harper, 2002, p 23). This quality of being able to capture action seems particularly important to the doing, action-orientation of occupation and possibly occupational choice. Since occupational choice is usually discussed in relation to

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occupation, this avenue for exploring the construct of occupational choice appears valuable. Also noteworthy is that through facilitating participation during photovoice, agency is set in motion. This goal of producing agency when doing photovoice (Wang, 1999) complements the aims of promoting occupational justice. This adds to the value that applying photovoice could offer to the exploration of occupational choice.

The analysis and interpretation of the photos by the photographer participant is embedded in the photovoice method (International Visual Methodologies for Social Change Project, 2009) and can be drawn upon during the photo-elicitation interview. An approach of working with the photographs is suggested as most helpful in ensuring that participants' voices are heard (International Visual Methodologies for Social Change Project, 2009). The ethnographic researcher is concerned with both the content and context of the photograph (Banks, Winter 1995) and thus can investigate these in tandem during the photo-elicitation interview. This supports the intention of understanding the relationship between occupational choice and social structure(s) within critical ethnography. It also creates the opportunity for participants to enhance their literacy and competence in sharing their perceptions of their photographs. Participants are enabled to learn to describe and read their photograph as a means for story-telling within photovoice and photo-elicitation. This may provide the opportunity for practice and possibly mastery of vital literacy skills including differentiating between fact and assumption, comparing and contrasting, making predictions and identifying main ideas and supporting details.

### *3.2.2.3 Participant observation*

The researcher, as a participant observer adds another layer of complexity to the researcher's role in context. It is suggested here that participant observation can be framed as an extension of the data generation processes initiated through the visual images. Drawing on visual anthropology, Pierce (Pierce, 2005) has shown that visual images can be used as forms of participant observation. Thus, the amount of time spent on participant observation includes the time spent learning through the visual data. Furthermore, time spent observing in the field includes all the observations made during data generation as well as the specific time set aside to focus on this task (Graue & Walsh, 1998a). Accepting this view and intending to contrast perspectives gained through previous methods, due consideration has to be given to how much time to

spend directly on observation. For example, in this study, how much time should be spent observing occupational choices being made? It is contended here that a once-off observation of young adolescents making occupational choices would allow for unobtrusive participant observation if it follows the collection of visual data. This direct observation of occupational choice could be considered together with the previous data sets, adding to the knowledge generated. Also, given that young adolescents would have generated visual data, the possibility existed that images could also be captured during participant observation, which would add to the researcher's field notes. Taking photos at appropriate opportunities would thus be ordinary and understandable to participants.

It has been argued that participant observation by an adult researcher of a child is difficult. It has therefore been proposed that the adult researcher goes as far as possible to assume the role of the child and even engages in the activities that children are engaging in (Spindler & Spindler, 1992). The benefits are that children perceive the researcher as less threatening and more familiar (*ibid*). This familiarity with children participants allows for the formation of excellent rapport between the researcher and participants so that the researcher will know more about the participants. This kind and intensity of participation depends on the site of the research. The researcher has to discern how best to participate *in situ*. This discernment is informed by the researcher's training and his/her sensitivities of social interaction within the research setting. This has to be managed in a way so that the researcher is unobtrusive in the setting (Spindler & Spindler, 1992). However the single requirement is that the researcher observes directly and be physically present when the action takes place and does little to change that by his or her presence (*ibid*). For the present study, this meant that the researcher had to be present when participants made occupational choices.

The role that the researcher adopts during participant observation is theoretically informed and shaped by the research setting (Graue, 1998). The researcher's role should be negotiated depending on the culture of the participants. Various levels of participation are possible during participant observation (Graue, 1998). The role could involve adopting the least adult role (Holmes, 1998) where the adult exerts no authority over children and begins to build trusting relationships in this way. Adopting this role involves setting the status and privileges as an adult aside to join children participants as equals in the research. This component has to be balanced with the positional power

usually associated with adults. The researcher has to show her<sup>1</sup> preference for a fair distribution of power with children as participants. A child-centred focus such as this demands that the researcher particularly, but not solely during participant observation, adapts their manner to one that appreciates the child's contextual view (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2001). The researcher does not predict or control the details of the data collection process. Instead s/he is tasked to look, see and listen (Agar, 1980) while maintaining the least adult role. Trusting the participants' judgments within their environment would have been initiated during the photovoice and photo-elicitation methods. This could be relied upon during participant observation.

During participant observation, the researcher has to look out for recurrent events (Erickson, 1992) and review this in conjunction with other sources of data. This would entail being alert to and exploring the emerging diverse perspectives on the nature of and influences on young adolescents' occupational choices. This was applied in the current study by allowing the participants to choose what is observed, and when and where the observation occurred, as an explicit enactment of the least adult role that showed respect for the participants' agency. It also allowed the participant to guide the researcher not to be obtrusive. Participants were already familiar with the researcher's particular focus on occupational choices since they previously discussed the prompts for the photos and would have had intensive discussions during the photo-elicitation interviews. The complementary use of participant observation during data generation allowed for the direct experience of the young adolescents' occupational choices. This adds to the value of the data gathered in the study.

#### *3.2.2.4 Interviewing*

Knowledge and skill in interviewing was valuable in two instances during this study. The first was during the photo-elicitation interviews and the second during interviews with a significant adult in the young adolescent's life. A conversational manner of conducting interviews which allows for turn-taking when talking was adopted, but with the requirement that the researcher listens for ideas or themes that could be followed up (Rubin & Rubin, 1995b). This facilitated children's sharing.

It is advised that the first step in interviewing children should be to negotiate the process so that the child has the opportunity to gauge what the interview is all about

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1. Consistent with the researcher's gender identity, reference is and will continue to be made to 'her', rather than 'his'.

and how one does it (Graue & Walsh, 1998a). The real interview usually only occurs a while after the rapport has been built through this negotiation. Also, since most of what children know is known implicitly, the research and interviews in particular should allow for repetition (ibid). The importance of the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee is crucial to the quality of the interview (Rubin & Rubin, 1995b). Repeated opportunities to meet and engage in discussions assist in building the relationship. Since the photographs are self-generated by the participants, the use of these as prompts during the photo-elicitation interviews also allow the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee to be nurtured. Furthermore, children's attention can be better sustained when they have something concrete on which to focus (Graue & Walsh, 1998a).

During photo-elicitation interviews, the interviews should be guided by the nuances of the individual and their collection of photographs. The participants should be requested to share their experiences of capturing the images (Ewald & Lightfoot, 2001b). Aspects of this experience can be further probed - in this study this was done to uncover the influences on the young adolescents' occupational choices. Following from this, the participants share the stories associated with each of their photographs (Pierce, 2003b). The exploration and productive inquiry into the participants' views would facilitate that various forms of knowing is revealed. This implies that insight into tacit, explicit, individual and group knowledge is sought. Productively inquiring (Argyris, 1999) into thinking reveals people's thinking and assumptions informing their action. Applied to this study, productive inquiry revealed the young adolescents' thinking and assumptions informing their occupational choices. When looking at and discussing their photographs, data that participants selected and how they related to their occupational choices were explored. This should be conducted in a flexible, iterative and continuous manner (Rubin & Rubin, 1995a). The flexibility during the interview requires that the researcher works out questions as ideas emerge during the research (Pierce, 2003b).

Acknowledging the centrality of relationships during interviews, this together with a flexible style is important when obtaining diverse perspectives on the young adolescents' occupational choices. This means that even when significant adults are interviewed the insight gained and the relationship with the child should guide the way that the interview is conducted (Christensen & James, 2001). The researcher is tasked

with carefully navigating her position as adult so that they engage with the adult as an adult researcher, but maintain the alliance (Mayall, 2001) that they develop with the child participant. Following this course places primary importance on the relationship with the child participant, while adults' contributions are viewed as being of secondary importance.

### *3.2.2.5 Conclusion to methods of data generation*

In conclusion, the use of photovoice and photo-elicitation, participant observation, together with the application of interviewing techniques challenges the research to skilfully pursue data generation in a manner appropriate to the research setting. The characteristic way that this occurs within a setting such as Lavender Hill, should thus be shaped by the features of that setting. Some insight into the features of Lavender Hill have already been presented earlier in this chapter. Further insights into how and what was learnt about Lavender Hill and the way that this shaped the methods applied in this study will be presented in the following chapter. Prior to this, the theoretical suggestion on data analysis in critical ethnography follows.

### **3.2.3 Data analysis within critical ethnography**

Carspecken (1996) offers a complex process of analysing data that allows meaning to be added by identifying all possible connotations associated with the data. It requires acknowledgement that all action (ibid), including occupational choice, occurs within a social system.

The reconstructive phase of analysis entails initial coding of tacit cultural and subjective factors (Carspecken, 1996) associated with occupational choice into explicit discourse. It draws on hermeneutic processes of human understanding. Meaning construction is initiated by reading through the transcriptions and reviewing the photographic collections while mentally noting possible meanings. After several such readings, patterns and unusual events important for analysis are highlighted. Several meaning fields or possible meanings can be coded for each selected set of data (Carspecken, 1996). It is argued that the more familiar the researcher is with the participants and their culture, the more accurate the meaning fields would be. Inferences are made into the timing, tone and gestures of each act. This initial meaning reconstruction is preliminary (ibid) and serves to clarify issues as interviewing,



observation and in this study, photovoice is continued. Once several segments have been analysed in this way, a peer debriefer ought to read through the reconstructions and problematise these (Carspecken, 1996). This facilitates increased awareness to her biases. Member checks are recommended after the observation phase (Carspecken, 1996). The meaning reconstructions set the foundations for validity claims of meaning during reconstructions and horizon analysis. The following section will explain what the five categories of validity claims are.

Pragmatic horizon analysis recognises the fact that we cannot understand ideas in the world without simultaneously understanding the “horizon” from which that idea emerges (Carspecken, 1996). It is asserted that people, such as young adolescents make claims related to the horizon that they are situated within. This horizon comprises elements of life-world and system, and young adolescents would be engaging in occupational choices that are either communicative action or in another type of action when making their claims or statements. Analysis of the statements would initially involve considering what possible meaning the speaker or other people in the setting might infer from the statements. Contrasting the meaning derived from the various participants and data sources (in this study these were from the photo-elicitation interviews, participant observation and interviews with significant adults), allows for the verification of the meanings. Carspecken (1996) noted that “meanings are always experienced as possibilities within a field of other possibilities” (p. 96). Pragmatic horizon analysis identifies five main categories of validity claims within the horizon of meaningful acts (*ibid*). These categories of validity claims direct the analysis towards more precise identification of meaning. The first validity claim is the notion that while each person or actor makes a statement or claim s/he is always engaged in reinforcing a social identity. This identity claim communicates the credibility and legitimacy of the identity. The intelligibility of what is communicated is claimed through the use of shared linguistic and intersubjective symbols that are understood by others within the setting. The analysis involves decoding and explicating these symbols. Third is making a claim to social legitimacy. The fourth category is a normative claim, and finally, there is reference to the participant’s subjective state. Analysing statements for these categories of validity claims are extremely important in indicating what is viewed as socially acceptable in a situation, and what is going to be accepted. With regards to young

adolescents' occupational choice it was supposed that analysis informed by these categories would facilitate a more in depth, critical perspective.

The data analysis for the entire data set and each of its components would allow for questioning of what the claims are that are implied in action. The foreground and background claims would be delved into. In relation to the photographs, the whole and components of photographs should be examined for the evidence that they present (Ewald & Lightfoot, 2001a) with reference to occupational choice. This would be followed for the entire collection and each photograph within it. In keeping with critical ethnography, an investigation of the forms of power present or dominance should also be explored. The approach to managing the visual and textual data should be guided by all of the above. This was applied in the current study as the data gathered through the photo-elicitation interviews was contrasted with those gained from the participant observation and interviews with significant adults. Furthermore, if analysis is initiated after the first few photo-elicitation interviews, the meaning attributed can be further explored with participants during subsequent interviews. In this way, the meaning and interpretations can be corroborated for their precision during data generation. As further insight is gained, the depth of the horizon analysis can be enhanced. Also participants would learn to become analytic of their own photographs and would share more (Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007).

The kingpin to successful reading of critical ethnographic analysis is the recognition that one can only ever understand an idea that someone has, or a statement that he or she makes, or an action that he or she takes against a horizon from which it is brought forth (Carspecken, 1996).

#### **3.2.4 Trustworthiness, rigour and verisimilitude**

Ensuring the truth value and rigor of a critical ethnographic study depends on the ideology and values of the researcher together with the approaches applied to data generation and analysis. The truth value does not assume consensus and a uniform view on complex phenomena (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) such as occupational choice, but a diversity of useful and valid views. Truth is multifaceted (Riessman, 1993) and is constructed as a dialogue where knowledge emerges as interpretations as actions are discussed and interpreted (Kvale, 1996). Knowledge generated is grounded in the current conditions of the world and the multiple perspectives of class, race, gender and

other group affiliations (Cresswell, 1998). Since critical ethnography is committed to critical social processes of meaning-making and illuminating experience through the descriptive use of language (Alexander, 2003), it is proposed that the researcher becomes the mirror to the world under analysis (Denzin, 1997a). Carspecken (1996) adopted Lincoln and Guba's (1985) validation criteria for assessing rigour and establishing trustworthiness, which includes credibility, transferability and confirmability. Each of these are discussed below.

Credibility refers to the confidence in the truth of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This can be accomplished through member checking, prolonged engagement, triangulation and peer debriefing. Member checking is advocated as an important way to validate data (Carspecken & Apple, 1992) where the researcher's notes are returned to the participants for further discussion and feedback. Carspecken viewed this as a form of generating dialogical data (Carspecken & Apple, 1992). This together with peer debriefing positively influences the credibility of the research. It allows for clarification of meanings and intentions to be sought.

Prolonged engagement involves spending adequate time observing various aspects of a setting, speaking with a range of people, and developing relationships and rapport with members of the culture (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Rigour involves building solid structures within the context in which one is working rather than just following procedures. These solid structures are characterised by interpersonal communication and intersubjectivity (Moss, 2004). The researcher should become trusted in the research setting so that the research process is appreciated and understood. This contributes to the depth of manner and content that participants would disclose. Triangulation entails the use of various sources of data to ensure that a rich understanding is developed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Methods triangulation refers to the consideration of the consistency of the findings generated through various methods of data collection (Patton, 2001). In the current study this meant contrasting the data generated through photovoice and photo-elicitation interviews vis-a-vis the observation sessions, interviews with significant adults and field notes.

Transferability questions the applicability of the research findings in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Geertz (1973) advocated that providing an extensive account of the research setting, times, situations and people within ethnography will allow others to judge when the findings may be transferable to similar others. Added to

this, making explicit the cultural and social relations within the research contributes to thick description and transferability (Holloway, 1997). Observation during data collection enhances the possibility of thick description (*ibid*).

Confirmability according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) refers to a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest. Carspecken (1996) diverges from this viewpoint and instead acknowledges that knowledge is produced in complex social contexts where issues of power and ethics exist. A critical ethnography has to offer an account of how different perspectives are promoted or suppressed within a culture. Verisimilitude is about propositions, not predictions about the concept under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Verisimilitude asks that the propositions made are considered in terms of how believable they are within the particular context of the study. Analysis of the validity claims described in the previous section contribute to the verisimilitude of the study. Further to this critical studies are evaluated for their degree of historical situatedness, erosion of ignorance and the ability to produce praxis or action (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Polit & Beck, 2007). The researcher as writer textually presents experiences since the language and speech captured during data gathering mirrors experience and transforms that which is being described. Consequently, ethnography calls for reflexivity (Denzin, 1997a).

Reflexivity involves positioning the writer in the text as a resource for uncovering experiences (Marcus, 1994). It also means when writing the researcher should engage in a subjectivist; intertextual standpoint (Denzin, 1997b). This means that during the analysis and writing of the research text the researcher should add his/her voice in relation to a larger conversation of issues, claiming subjective involvement while maintaining a sense of purpose and process. Reflection during the research process entails a conscious examination of how the researcher, as an active creator of knowledge, affects the data gathering, analysis and representation of the findings (Thomas, 1993). It is suggested that self-awareness can be facilitated through repeated thinking about the project processes and consequences in relation to the original knowledge (*ibid*). The positions that are adopted are less significant than the consciousness of how these influence the data gathering process. It is accepted that participants and researchers can only offer accounts of their experiences rather than full explanations of the intentions or meanings of all their actions. Rather, the important

task for the critical ethnographer is to question how the data or findings may have been different if a different ideology and values were applied and secondly, how this would or would not have served the pursuit of social justice (Thomas, 1993). Beyond reflexivity, it is further suggested that writing within ethnography should apply the norms and goals of public journalism. Paramount to this is that the goals of ethnography are to raise private and public consciousness (Denzin, 1997b). Within this framework, the ethnographer's goals and principles are guided by public journalism. This includes making ethnography applicable beyond the individual so that issues of relevance and importance to individuals becomes part of public discourse (Alexander, 2003; Carspecken, 1999).

This section has described mechanisms to evaluate the rigour, trustworthiness and verisimilitude of research. While these have been discussed separately, they are intertwined and impact on each other. They thus have to be considered as complementary.

### **3.3 Learning from the voices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill through professional engagement**

The following section explains the advantage of my prior knowledge and skills as an occupational therapist working in Lavender Hill in shaping the current critical ethnographic study. The influences of working as a practitioner and student service learning supervisor, conducting an ethnographic study and a youth risk behaviour survey with young adolescents in Lavender Hill are elaborated upon.

#### **3.3.1 Learning as an educator and practitioner**

The policy and ethos of the University of Cape Town Department of Occupational Therapy where I work is that lecturers should not only supervise students in practice learning areas, but should also seek opportunities for research and practice there. In keeping with this and given my determination to develop interventions that would benefit young adolescents in Lavender Hill, I practised as an occupational therapist and supervised students' practice at Zerilda Park and Levana primary schools there (from 2001 - current). Consequently, I was exposed to young adolescents in Lavender Hill while fulfilling different roles. As a practice learning supervisor, I was privileged to

observe how students entered and developed relationships which permitted the students varying levels of insight into the lives of the young adolescents and the milieu of the schools where students were placed. During these observations, I noticed that an attitude of respect for the value of young adolescents' ways of interacting and going about their daily lives facilitated relationship building. Thus, although some of the young adolescents' behaviours evoked intense moral and emotional responses within me and many students, my approach was often to caution students during service learning not to react to these. Instead, I developed tolerance towards actions and interactions, which I may not have entirely agreed with, and adapted my communication to reflect my insight into the way that young adolescents and community members communicated. This enabled me to maintain collaborative relationships with young adolescents and community stakeholders. Being conscious of and working at managing the tensions associated with sometimes differing perspectives between what may have been proposed compared with my own views, prepared me for interacting with young adolescents and community members in an undaunted way.

My capacity to engage with young adolescents was further enhanced during facilitation of occupational therapy groups. During student service learning blocks, students under my supervision worked with groups of young adolescents and between practice learning blocks, when there were no students, I would offer the service. Furthermore, we acquired work spaces at each of the two primary schools where services were offered. We opened these spaces up to all learners at the schools during break-time so that they were allowed to access the resources (such as the bats, balls, books etc.) that we had available. At Zerilda park, we had two shipping containers which had been converted into office spaces. Levana Primary allowed us to share their hall area with the class that was located there intermittently. While neither of these spaces were ideal, at least access to both of these spaces meant that there was a private space for the research at each of the schools. These spaces were eventually used to meet with participants. Indirectly this led to the young adolescents associating this research with the occupational therapy services on offer. Our attitude to delivering services was to respect and promote the learners' human rights. Our mode of rendering the services was to have closed groups of ten young adolescents who participated in occupational therapy sessions over a two-year period. During these sessions, we aimed to improve the young adolescents' lifeskills and promote their sense of agency. My assumption,

drawing on the Ottawa Charter strategic actions (World Health Organisation, 1986), was that young adolescents needed opportunities to develop their lifeskills, and that this would positively change the way that they interacted with one another. I believed that teaching these skills while engaging group members in occupations during the groups, or reflecting on the occupations that they engaged in, would meaningfully contribute to their lives. Working with young adolescents for periods of one to two years gave me ample time to practise maintaining relationships with them. However, I discovered that they revealed very little about their everyday lives and occupations in these occupational therapy groups. Their perceptions of what they saw as appropriate and the way that they selected to communicate in occupational therapy sessions were constrained to exclude information about their actual daily experiences of occupational engagement. They either described socially expected accounts of their occupational engagement or avoided discussing it altogether. This continued despite direct and indirect attempts within sessions to gather information about their everyday experiences of occupational engagement. I was unable to influence their occupational engagement. I realised the need to find alternate ways to learn more about their occupational engagement.

Perspectives from parents, educators and other service providers on young adolescents' occupational engagement were documented or readily available through various non-governmental agencies' reports and through attending parent and educators' meetings. This contrasted with the absence of accessible data from young adolescents describing their occupations. The wisdom that I assumed them to hold as social actors appeared in glimpses during casual interaction with them. I assumed that since young adolescents made and acted upon their occupational choices and engaged in occupations, they had knowledge that could contribute to designing effective interventions.

### **3.3.2 Learning as an ethnographic researcher**

During the two years preceding the initiation of the current study, I conducted a study to gain familiarity more formally with young adolescents' perspectives on their occupations. My intention here is not to report on the methods or findings of that pursuit, but rather to explicate how it contributed to conceptualising the critical ethnographic approach that I later used. I conducted a descriptive ethnography,

employing focus groups interviews, individual interviews and photo-elicitation interviews based on photographs taken by young adolescents whom I worked with. A research assistant liaised with teachers to select a sample according to set criteria. The criteria were set to yield maximum variation in the sample. These criteria were: diversity in the family background, age; and gender. We recruited thirty-two participants. Two focus group interviews were conducted, one with a group of boys and another with a group of girl participants at each of the two primary schools where I worked in Lavender Hill. During the focus groups, they matter-of-factly and easily described the occupations that they engaged in whilst in discussion with each other. I marvelled at how different this was from occupational therapy sessions and realised that the research participants were given more control over the content of the session. Once I had completed the focus groups, I conducted individual interviews with six of the participants. Knowing that it was difficult to converse abstractly with them about their occupational engagement, I decided to use photographs to assist with prompting them. My research assistant issued each of the participants with a camera and, once they had taken the photographs, I interviewed them. Through this, I progressed to appreciate the natural, spontaneous way that photographs contributed to prompting discussions about occupational choices (Galvaan, 2003).

Through the above descriptive ethnography, I gained insight into the need to review my reliance on the teachers' assistance with sample selection. The frequent differences in perspectives between teachers and young adolescents and the teachers' judgments of young adolescents shaped who they recommended for the study. This compelled me to think deeply about how best to approach selecting a sample in future. I also recognised that, by sharing logistical duties with a research assistant, my relationship with participants was distant. I realised that not being directly and actively involved in sample selection contributed negatively to the quality of the relationships formed with participants. The criteria related to their demographic profiles and seeking maximum variation in the sample was overshadowed by the importance of seeing that each young adolescent had an important story to tell. Furthermore, I became conscious that their descriptions of their occupational engagement gave me voyeuristic insight into their sometimes unusual medley of occupations. However, it did not help me to understand what needed to change in order to shift their occupational engagement. Lastly, their identification of their occupational pursuits kindled my resolution that the



data analysis in the current study would have to go beyond classifying their occupations through a content analysis. During this time, I cultivated my ability to interact and began to value the particular way of relating with young adolescents.

Contrasting my earlier experiences of young adolescents during occupational therapy sessions and as a researcher led me to identify the way forward. I discerned that they seemed to describe one version of their occupations when faced by adults who had authority or power and another when they felt more in control. This insight together with my focus on young adolescents, informed the current critical ethnographic study. It initiated my thinking about the value of sample selection in a recursive manner. I also realised that I should design the sample selection so that young adolescents played a part in configuring the sample and so that I was directly responsible for engaging with them. I will return to the application of this key realisation in the section on data gathering later in this chapter. However, at this point, it left me wondering: "How prevalent are occupations involving risk amongst young adolescents in Lavender Hill?"

### **3.3.3 Learning from the Youth Risk Behaviour Survey**

Following the ethnographic study described in 3.2.2, I conducted a Youth Risk Behaviour Survey with young adolescents at primary schools in Lavender Hill. I became aware of the South African Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS) (Reddy et al., 2003) as an available tool for describing the prevalence of risk behaviours amongst adolescents. My view was that the survey would provide me with empirical evidence on what the extent of participation in risk occupations was amongst young adolescents in Lavender Hill. I was interested in this since preventing risk behaviour was an expressed concern amongst professionals and community members and was sometimes even referred to by young adolescents. I sought to learn about the prevalence of risk behaviours amongst young adolescents directly from them. This was viewed as one of the many perspectives on young adolescents' occupations.

I adapted the English and Afrikaans versions of the South African Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (Appendix one). The YRBS consists of 10 sections, including demographic information, violence-related behaviour, suicidal behaviour and substance use. Construct validity of the YRBS was confirmed during the national YRBS project (Reddy et al, 2003). The English and Afrikaans versions of this questionnaire were

modified for use in the present study. A change to the response options for demographic details was made, making it more appropriate for younger participants. Due to the poor literacy and the young age of the participants, the survey was administered during a face-to-face interview, rather than by self-report method. Cue cards containing the response options were presented during the interviews to facilitate participation and accommodate for poor literacy in the target population. Responses were recorded on a response sheet. The questionnaire was piloted with five learners to ensure face validity.

The sampling frame included the 1300 young adolescent learners between the ages of eleven and thirteen, in grades six and seven and attending the four primary schools in Lavender Hill. Information about the research project was presented to all Grade Six and Seven learners. Class lists were obtained from all the Grade Six and Seven teachers and a study sample of 214 was determined using simple random sampling.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Cape Town Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Committee (Appendix two) and also from the Western Cape Education Department (Ref 20040804-0019). Parent consent and learner assent was obtained prior to the administration of the survey. Suitable times for administration of the surveys were arranged with class teachers. Data was captured using statistical computer software. The data was analysed to illustrate the adolescents' prevalence of engagement in risk.

#### *3.3.3.1 Results of the YRBS*

The modified YRBS was administered to 212 participants ranging from between eleven to thirteen years old. The mean age of participants was 12 years. An overview of results pertinent to the current study is offered here.

Providing some indication of their familial circumstances, twelve percent of the sample indicated that they were living without a father. Contrasting this with the two percent who were without their mothers, reflects the key presence of women as mothers in Lavender Hill, compared to the absence of fathers as role-models. Tables 1 and 2 reflect the participants' descriptions of their parents' employment status.

**Table 1: Father's level of employment**

| Father's level of employment | Percentage |
|------------------------------|------------|
|------------------------------|------------|

| <b>(N=212)</b>       |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| No father            | 12% |
| I don't know         | 10% |
| Employed             | 62% |
| Unemployed           | 13% |
| Father ill/ disabled | 3%  |

**Table 2: Mother's level of employment**

| <b>Mother's level of employment</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>(N=212)</b>                      |                   |
| No mother                           | 2%                |
| I don't know                        | 1%                |
| Employed                            | 62%               |
| Unemployed                          | 25%               |
| Mother ill/ disabled                | 6%                |

\*2 participants' response sheets had errors on them

13% of participants reported that their father was unemployed and 25% of participants reported that their mother was unemployed. This attested to the low socio-economic status of Lavender Hill. This was consistent with the constructions of Lavender Hill as a working class community marked with forms of poverty.

The categories asking participants about their subjective identification of race mirrored the same as the national YRBS which followed the South African demographic conventions for race categories (Reddy, Resnicow, Omardien, & Kambaran, 2007). Since many of the residents of Lavender Hill would be classified as coloured, it is interesting to note the participants' subjective identification of their racial categorisation in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Subjective identification of race**

| <b>Race</b> | <b>Male<br/>(n=100)</b> | <b>Female<br/>(n=112)</b> | <b>% Total</b> |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|

|          |            |           |     |
|----------|------------|-----------|-----|
| Black    | 10% (n=10) | 13%(n=15) | 12% |
| Coloured | 73%(n=73)  | 70%(n=80) | 72% |
| Indian   | 2% (n=2)   | 3%(n=3)   | 2%  |
| White    | 11%(n=11)  | 7% (n=8)  | 9%  |
| Other    | 4%(n=4)    | 4%(n=5)   | 4%  |

1 female participant gave a response not reflecting the available options

The high percentage of participants identifying themselves as coloured matched the traditional profile of this community. The smaller percentage of black participants was consistent with the steady increase in black people living in Lavender Hill. The 9% identifying themselves as white was interesting in light of the fact that none of these participants would have been attributed as white. It raised the possibility that this small percentage of participants were redefining their racial identities and had different perceptions of race.

**Table 4: Eating Patterns**

| <b>Days going to sleep hungry in past week (N= 212)</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|-------------------|
| Very often: 6-7 days                                    | 11% (n=23)        |
| Often: 4-5 days   | 12%(n=26)         |
| Sometimes: 2-3 days                                     | 32% (n=68)        |
| Rarely: 1 day   | 11% (n=23)        |
| Never: 0 days   | 34% (n=72)        |

55% of participants (Table 4) revealed that they had regular experiences of going to sleep while hungry. This offered a view of the poor access to food in this working class community. However diversity was reflected by the forty-five percent of participants who had access to food and did not go to sleep hungry.

With regards to substance use, participants' responses are reflected in Table 5.

**Table 5: Substance use**

| <b>Frequency of substances use</b>     | <b>Male<br/>(n=100)</b> | <b>Female<br/>(n=112)</b> | <b>Total %<br/>(n=212)</b> |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ever smoked tobacco cigarette          | 34%(n=34)               | 21%(n=24)                 | 27%                        |
| Age of initiation of smoking<br></=11  | 23%(n=23)               | 15%(n=17)                 | 19%                        |
| Ever used alcohol                      | 100%(n=100)             | 98%(n=110)                | 99%                        |
| Past month: Binge drinking 1-9<br>days | 10% (n=10)              | 14%(n=16)                 | 12%                        |
| Age of initiation of alcohol </=11     | 10%(n=10)               | 5%(n= 6)                  | 8%                         |
| Ever used dagga                        | 5%(n=5)                 | 0                         | 2%                         |

Given the young age of the sample, the high percentages of participants who have had experiences with substance use was especially of concern. The prevalence of smoking tobacco and binge drinking was particularly worrying. These results supported the need to further explore the influences on young adolescents' occupational choices.

Table 6 below depicts their participation in violence-related behaviour.

**Table 6: Violence-related behaviour**

| <b>Variables</b>                                    | <b>Male<br/>(n=100)</b> | <b>Female<br/>(n=112)</b> | <b>Total%<br/>(n=212)</b> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ever carried a weapon                               | 18%(n=18)               | 4%(n=5)                   | 11%                       |
| Ever carried a gun                                  | 6%(n=6)                 | 2%(n=2)                   | 4%                        |
| Ever missed school because of violence              | 38%(n=38)               | 34%(n=38)                 | 36%                       |
| Ever missed school because unsafe                   | 40%(n=40)               | 32%(n=36)                 | 36%                       |
| Stopped playing because threatened with<br>violence | 39%(n=39)               | 37%(n=41)                 | 38%                       |
| Ever involved in physical fights                    | 59%(n=59)               | 40%(n=45)                 | 49%                       |
| Ever threatened with a weapon at school             | 13%(n=13)               | 6%(n=7)                   | 9%                        |
| Ever threatened others with a weapon at<br>school   | 4%(n=4)                 | 5%(n=6)                   | 5%                        |

Many participants revealed that they had the experience of having carried a weapon, with some even having carried a gun. Violence affecting both girls and boys was of concern. The way that violence influenced their daily activities emerged. It was striking that over a third of participants reported feeling unsafe, compromising their school attendance or even stopping their play because of violence. Some participants reported contributing to violence at school. Thus, violence was experienced not only in the local community, but also at school.

Another category of risk which was of concern related to the participants' sexual activity. Eight percent of boys and four percent of girls reported that they had had sex. Of these participants half of the boys reported that their partners had not used any form of contraception. It may be that these boys were unaware of the methods that their partners were using. Two percent of girls reported using birth control pills; one percent said that they used condoms and one percent reported using no contraceptives. Table 7 reflects the participants' knowledge and sexual behaviours related to HIV/AIDS.

**Table 7: Sexual activity and knowledge of HIV/AIDS**

| <b>Sexual behaviours</b>          | <b>Male<br/>(n=100)</b> | <b>Female<br/>(n=112)</b> | <b>Total%<br/>(n=212)</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Education on HIV at school        | 88%(n=88)               | 89%(n=100)                | 89%                       |
| Don't know if at risk of HIV      | 62%(n=62)               | 55%(n=62)                 | 58%                       |
| Don't know how to protect self    | 29%(n=29)               | 34%(n=38)                 | 32%                       |
| Not able to protect self from HIV | 18%(n=18)               | 13%(n=15)                 | 16%                       |
| Able to protect self from HIV     | 53%(n=53)               | 54%(n=60)                 | 53%                       |

Despite the fact that 88% of boys and 89% percent of girls participating in the survey reported that they received HIV education at school, a high percentage did not know if they were at risk of becoming infected with HIV in their lifetime. A further 29% of boys and 34% of girls reported not knowing how to protect themselves from HIV infection. Further to this, 18% of boys and thirteen percent of girls reported not feeling able to

protect themselves from HIV. This raised concern about the relationship between their knowledge and occupational choices.

Lastly, their responses provided a glimpse of their emotional states. 16% of boys and 19% of girls reported experiencing a sense of sadness or hopelessness for at least two weeks over the past six months to the extent that they stopped some of their usual activities. The following table reflects the participants' suicidal intentions.

**Table 8: Suicidal Intent**

| <b>Variable</b>   | <b>Male<br/>(n=100)</b> | <b>Female<br/>(n=112)</b> | <b>Total %<br/>(n=212)</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Consider suicide  | 14%(n=14)               | 18%(n=20)                 | 16%                        |
| Plan suicide      | 10%(n=10)               | 13%(n=15)                 | 12%                        |
| Attempted suicide | 8%(n=8)                 | 9%(n=10)                  | 8%                         |

16% of participants responded that they had considered suicide, while 12% had planned it. A further 8% indicated that they had attempted suicide. Interpreting this in relation to the demands placed on participants because of their demographic profiles, led me to speculate whether their occupational choices would show any glimpses of resilience. Within critical ethnography, survey data is significant relative to the action that it inspires (Carspecken, 1996). In this study, the YRBS contributed to informing the research process.

### *3.3.3.2 Conclusion on learning from the YRBS*

Besides learning about the prevalence of their risk behaviours, the cautious way that young adolescents reported on their behaviours was conspicuous. Given my experience of the way that young adolescents differentiated what they shared during the ethnography compared to the occupational therapy sessions, I was aware that the risk behaviours may have been under-reported. Despite this, of concern was the prevalence of risk behaviours. The confirmation that they engaged in risk behaviours stood in sharp contrast with the endearing, playful aspects of many of the occupations that young adolescents described during my previous ethnographic research. I was left with contrasting images of young adolescents which I could not tolerably reconcile. I came to

see that identifying their occupations would offer me a little leverage to change my interventions.

I also became more certain that the process of generating data was crucial. My research engagements at this stage facilitated my awareness and understanding of 'the ways' of young adolescents in Lavender Hill. Comparing my experiences in the roles as researcher, practitioner and supervisor, I realised that the way young adolescents interact was partially a consequence of their social positions and that this would influence the process of data generation. Acknowledging that the young adolescents' social positions had to be considered was substantiated by my observations of the expected, respectful position of young adolescents as children in relation to adults in their families, school and community. Drawing from these experiences, I endeavoured to be participatory and use a critical approach to generating the data.

### **3.4 Data generation in the critical ethnographic study of young adolescents' occupational choices**

#### **3.4.1 Obtaining ethical and stakeholder approval**

The following section briefly describes the process of achieving ethics approval and the way in which I observed my ethical responsibility during this study. I captured the details of my intended critical ethnography in a research proposal and submitted this for review and approval to the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and then University of Cape Town's Health Sciences Ethics Committee. Once ethics approval had been obtained (Rec/Ref 278/2004 in Appendix two), I submitted the research proposal to the Western Cape Education Department to obtain their approval. When permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department as an extension of the permission granted for the survey, I submitted the proposal to the principals at the two primary schools where I worked in Lavender Hill and requested permission from them. Applying for permission from gatekeepers such as this may have been arduous for a newcomer. However, given my extensive work at the schools prior to this research, I found it straightforward.

The principals approved my study and informed staff members about the research, but left it up to me to communicate the details with teachers. I met with the Teacher Support Teams at each of the schools. In my role as a service provider, I was



accountable to the Teacher Support Team at each of the schools. These teams consisted of about four teachers who were selected to assist with ensuring that learning was optimised at the schools. In reality, they spent a lot of time seeking solutions to the social and learning difficulties with which learners at the school presented. Since I regularly attended these meetings, I simply presented my research at one of their meetings and requested their support. With their blessing of the research came their undertaking to inform other teachers about the research. In this way, approval for the research was also received directly from the teachers. I then established a memorandum of understanding with a community social worker at New World Foundation (a well-established non-governmental social service in Lavender Hill). She agreed to receive referrals if the need for intervention from social services arose. This was not called upon in this study. The next layer of approval was from the participants and their parents. This process will now be described sequentially. Due to the process of data generation adopted in this study, not all the participants were selected at the same time. Consent was obtained from each participant only after they were selected for the study.

In keeping with the participatory nature of data generation in this study, I first sought verbal assent from the selected participants. Young adolescents' agency was respected in this way since they were given the opportunity to decide if they wanted to participate in the research by assenting verbally and then requesting parental consent. This also allowed me to develop rapport with adolescents and study participants within the setting. After initial introductions, we agreed that I could arrange with their teacher for a time to meet with them. While my primary relationship was with the participant, I needed to negotiate access via their teacher so that we could meet during school-time. In discussion with the participant's class teacher a time during the school day was identified for me to meet with the participant without compromising their academic programme. Furthermore, the study was planned so that no data was gathered during examination times. Upon meeting with the participant at the time allocated by the class teacher, I discussed the research study, explaining the data generation process. If the participant continued to assert their verbal assent, they were requested to seek consent from their parents or guardians. I issued the participant with a parent/guardian information and consent form (Appendix three) and arranged a convenient and suitable time to return to collect the completed forms. The purpose, procedures and risks

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associated with their participation were clearly described in the information sheet (Appendix three) accompanying the consent forms. It was emphasised that young adolescents' participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, even though their parents/guardians would have given consent. In the consent form, the parent's right to decline consent without penalty at any stage of the research was emphasised. Parents/Guardians were asked to provide consent for:

- their child to be interviewed,
- collection of data using a disposable camera
- and for me to participate in an observation session with their child.

Parents/guardians consented to participating in the interview themselves on the day of their interview. Participants and their parents were advised that if incidents of serious physical abuse or sexual abuse were uncovered, the researcher would be obliged to inform social services. Participants were also issued a similar information sheet (Appendix four). Having received a full description of the study, the participant was encouraged to ask any questions for clarification or otherwise at this stage.

Most participants expressed eagerness and curiosity, but had few questions. With three of the participants Kimmy, Godwin and Clive (to be introduced later in this section), I had to return twice to collect their parent consent forms. I used the opportunity to check if there was perhaps hesitation on their part or if their parents had responded negatively to their participation. However, the participants indicated that they had simply forgotten the forms. Upon receiving their signed parental consent forms, I reviewed the focus and techniques of the research with them and obtained their assent in written format (Appendix four).

One young adolescent, who had been referred to me by another participant, did not participate in the study. With her, I had received her verbal assent. However, her parents did not consent as they believed that the time required for this study was too demanding. This participant was expected to attend Moslem school classes in the afternoon and her parents were concerned that the research would interfere with this. To be sure that consent was not withheld because of a concern that abuse may be revealed, I informed the class teacher about this. Gauging from the class teacher's response, I deduced that this young adolescent's parents were religious and that the teacher was not concerned that she was particularly at risk of abuse. I thus thanked the

young adolescent for her willingness to consider contributing and invited her to recommend other participants if she wished to.

Access to the opportunity for participant observation was negotiated with each participant. The relationship that I had established with the participants sensitively guided this. It involved placing the needs and concerns of the participants above my need to engage in participant observation. This is elaborated upon in the section describing the negotiation of participant observation sessions. I took all possible steps to ensure that the participants' identities were protected during data generation and reporting. Limiting my contact with teachers to a minimum and focusing on the participants resulted in the educators not expecting that I reveal the contents and experiences of data generation to them. A pseudonym was assigned for the purposes of discussing and reporting on the findings and care was taken to ensure that the details of their occupational choices would not be traceable back to their individual identities. The extended time between data generation and returning to the community to report back facilitated a lapse in memory so that teachers and community members were less likely to identify the participants in the data presented. It also meant that the participants had all graduated from primary school by the time that the final study findings were reported on and discussed at the schools. This contributed to ensuring non-maleficence.

My respect for the participants and their peers was integral to ensuring that no harm was incurred. Furthermore, the open, flexible manner in which participants were encouraged to engage allowed the research process to be sensitive to the participants' boundaries. This was enhanced by my experiences of delivering occupational therapy services in a respectful, participatory manner which was protective of children's rights. My emphasis centred on establishing and continuing an interpersonal contract with young adolescents in a way that respected their personal boundaries. Consistent with Melton's (1992) recommendations, I was able to clearly convey to and discuss with the participants what risk and exposure they may have been exposed to. Through discussing the risk with them throughout the research process, I was able to manage the research process to ensure that ethical principles were upheld. This was achieved by gathering data over a prolonged period while consistently explaining the expected exposure to the participants and gauging their responses. Furthermore, adopting a stepwise, process-oriented approach to data gathering allowed for repeated opportunities to firstly, check that the participant was comfortable with the research

demands and secondly, eager to continue. The deliberate and considerate way that I engaged with and viewed participants ensured that ethical principles were fundamentally integrated into all the research processes and procedures described below.

### **3.4.2 Sample selection**

Criterion-based sample selection was utilised. This approach was sequential, yet dynamic, allowing me to recursively select the sample during the data gathering process. I harvested my prior insights from my roles as practitioner, supervisor and researcher to inform the sample selection. Acknowledging that the criteria for sample selection could be broad and would be refined during the process of sample selection, I developed a set of criteria with which to begin selecting the sample. My view was that these were a starting point for the research, but that I would be guided by the young adolescents. The attributes were aligned with my knowledge of the young adolescents, the community and the research question. They were that:

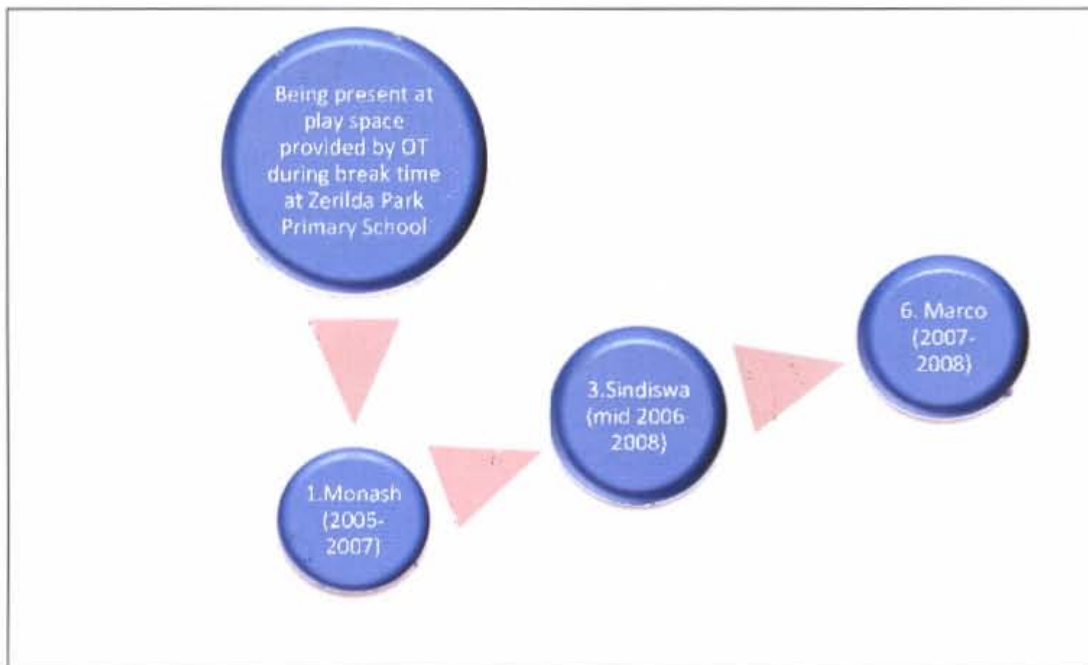
- a) The participants should live in one of the various parts of the greater Lavender Hill area. Based on previous experience, I knew that young adolescents from across these areas attended the two primary schools that the study sample would be drawn from.
- b) The participants had to be between the ages of 11 and 13 years at the time of their entry into the study. This age range corresponded with my concern with young adolescents.
- c) Seven young adolescents were to be included in the study. The number of participants was determined by theoretical and practical factors. The theoretical endeavour to generate understanding into the nature of occupational choice was one that required in-depth information from each of the participants. My prior practice and research experience alerted me to the need to patiently nurture relationships with participants. This meant that I needed to be generous with the time I anticipated spending with each participant. The anticipated time-intensive data generation strategies also bore financial costs, limiting the amount of data that could be generated. I conceded that this study would explore the nature and factors that

influenced young adolescents' occupational choices, recognising that diverse information would be sought, but that the full diversity could not be captured. Confirmation of this sample size as adequate was corroborated during the process of data gathering and will be substantiated later.

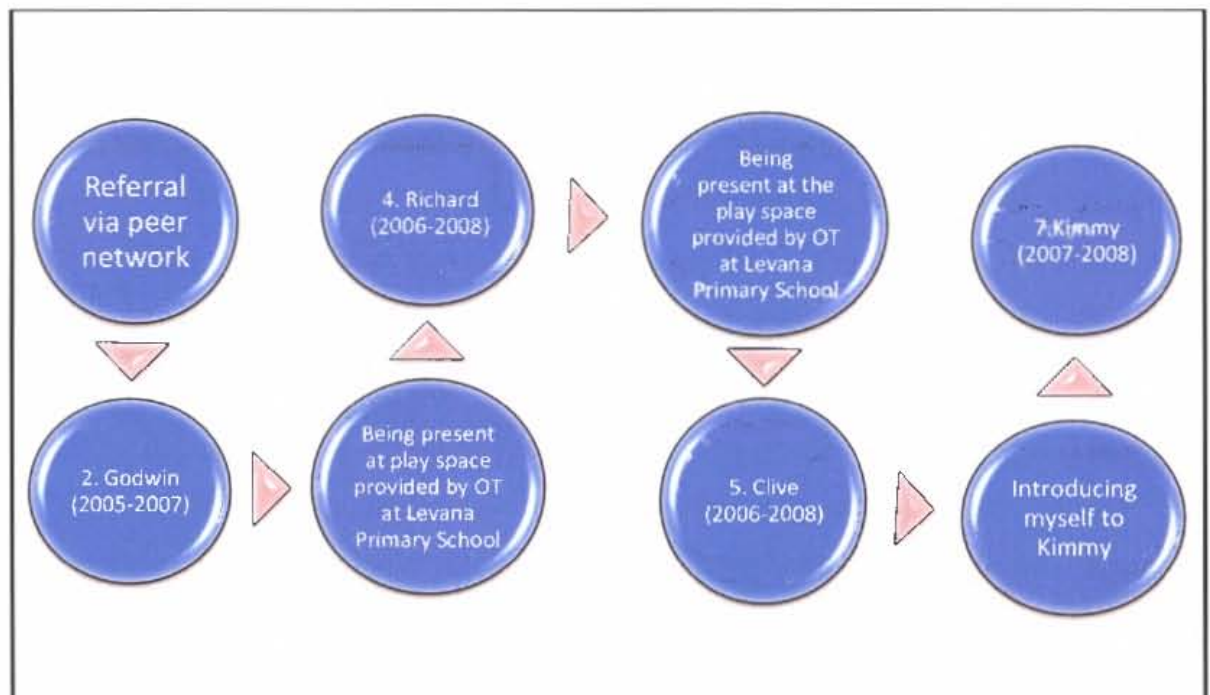
- d) The selected young adolescents would be the primary participants in the study whilst the significant adult whom they identified should agree to be interviewed in order to for me to gain another perspective. I assumed that significant adults may have been instrumental in the young adolescents' occupational choices.

I initiated participant selection by placing myself into the occupational therapy spaces provided at each of the primary schools. This was essentially the indoor play area at each of the schools. Consequently, I accessed the participants through referrals from young adolescents whom I knew as a result of occupational therapy sessions and through recommendations from existing participants. Figures 1 and 2 below show how I progressed with selecting participants during this critical ethnography. The numbering within the figures refers to the order in which participants were selected and the year refers to the date when data gathering occurred. Thereafter details of how participants were selected are described.

**Figure 1: Sample selection at Zerilda Park Primary School**



**Figure 2: Sample selection at Levana Primary School**



The following section describes how each of the seven participants were recruited and selected for this study. My recruitment efforts began at Zerilda Park primary school (figure 1) where I had first initiated occupational therapy sessions and where it was still common practice for the occupational therapy students and I to allow children at the



school, during break-time, to freely access available resources. They used the balls, puzzles, and books, drew on the paper or would just sit and quietly socialise. I knew that many young adolescents came to 'hang out' there and that if I spent time during breaks there, I would find study participants.

### ***Meeting Monash***

On the occasion when I was ready to begin my sample selection I went with the specific intention of selecting a participant based on the attributes that I had identified. On this day, I sat as usual, observing children coming and going into this space. However, I decided that I would introduce myself, not as a practitioner but as a researcher. About five minutes after being there, I was approached by Monash. She offered me a sweet and then enquired about who I was. Relieved to be able to speak to a young adolescent as a potential research participant, I immediately introduced myself and the research. I was impressed by her charm and warm manner. She excitedly identified that she was twelve years old and lived in Seawinds (see Map 2, chapter 1.3) and that she wanted to be a study participant. Equally enthused, I got her class details and then proceeded to meet and issue her with the consent forms. At this meeting she revealed that her parents had abandoned her at a young age leaving her under her granny's guardianship. Issuing the consent forms, I requested that her granny complete them. At the set time in the data gathering process, I met her granny at the recreation centre where she worked as a general assistant. I was familiar with this centre as I had worked there as a play facilitator as a student. When I was about halfway through gathering data from Monash, I embarked on finding a second participant at Levana Primary School where I worked in Lavender Hill (see figure 2).

### ***Meeting Godwin***

At the point of meeting Godwin, I was involved with facilitating occupational therapy sessions at Levana Primary School in Lavender Hill. To this end, I had a captive audience in a group of young adolescents who interacted with me on a weekly basis. I decided to apply network selection to assist with selecting a participant. Consequently, I told my occupational therapy group members about my research. They keenly agreed to recommend participants whom I could approach. After some discussion amongst themselves, two group members, Mitchie and Donald, assured me that they knew just

the person. They expressed confidence in his ability to participate and add to the research. The two friends proceeded to introduce me to Godwin by bringing him to the hall area allocated to the occupational therapy services. I valued that, unlike my previous participant, Monash, Godwin did not frequent the occupational therapy service. My perspective was that this would add to the diversity of the participants. Different from his friends' boldness, Godwin appeared timid and shy. Amidst all the activity in the hall area during break-time, I carefully explained the research to Godwin. Despite his muffled articulations, I learnt that he lived with his mother in Capricorn, had recently turned eleven and was willing to participate in the research. Receiving this initial verbal assent, I arranged to meet him alone. Given his shyness and that it was hard to understand his way of speaking, I was left feeling anxious about how he would contribute to the study and was curious about his friends' confidence in Godwin's participation. This anxiety was elevated when I returned to collect his mother's signed consent form, only to find that he did not have it. Eventually, about a month after our first introduction, he returned the form. Remaining brave in the face of these hurdles and trusting that I could learn from Godwin, we continued. I met and interviewed Godwin's mom at their home.

### ***Meeting Sindiswa***

Having completed the research process with Monash, I discussed the sample selection criteria with her. When asked about identifying someone who was different to her she advised that she would ask her friends to help her to find someone who spoke Xhosa as their first language, rather than Afrikaans. Consequent to this and with the help of her Xhosa-speaking peers in the class, I was introduced to Sindiswa at break-time. She was an eleven-year old girl who used to spend part of her break-time with Monash's classmates. At the time of meeting her, I was immediately impressed by her confidence. My initial fascination with Sindiswa was with the eloquent way that she spoke the colloquial, local Afrikaans and adopted some of the mannerisms common to people in Lavender Hill while at the same time identifying herself as an umXhosa. I interviewed Sindiswa's mom, Noluthando, at their home in Capricorn.

### ***Meeting Richard***

Through my sample selection discussions with Godwin and his friends and my continued presence in the community, awareness of the research was raised amongst young adolescents. Consequently Godwin and Richard had discussed the research. Thus twelve-year old Richard approached me directly during a break-time to ask for the opportunity to participate. However, Godwin also recommended that I consider Richard. Godwin's view, which Richard confirmed, was that Richard lived in the *kortse* (see definition of terms). Since I did not have anyone from this significant part of Lavender Hill already participating, I included him. Twelve-year old Richard was pleased that his continued requests to participate yielded positive results for him. Despite this initial bold persistence to participate, I later encountered him as hesitant and insecure. He spoke with an awkwardness that often left me feeling uneasy. Unlike all the previous participants, Richard was a loner and came across as troubled. Despite this, I considered myself fortunate to learn about his perspectives on occupational choice, since I thought that this was not easily accessible. I met with Richard's mom, Tessa at her employer's home where she was a domestic worker for two days per week.

### ***Meeting Clive***

As data gathering progressed with Richard and Sindiswa, I prepared to select a fifth participant. I continued to attend the break-time sessions at Levana Primary School and during this time got to know Clive. This playful, nonchalant, eleven-year old and his friends expressed their curiosity in the research. It appeared that they were keen to take part in the research because they wanted to access the cameras which they knew about from seeing other participants. After a conversation with Clive, I discovered that he, like Richard, also lived in the central Lavender Hill area, but lived in a house, rather than in the *kortse*. This interested me because I wondered if the nature of his occupational choices would be similar to Richard's. After his initiation, gaining consent from Clive's mother Merle, was trouble-free. The interview was conducted at Clive's home.

### ***Meeting Marco***

I was cautious not only to select participants from those who frequented the occupational therapy services area. Therefore, when approached by Henry, a young

adolescent who frequented this area, I described the research to him and asked him to assist with identifying a participant. In this way, Henry felt that he was valued, even though he could not become a participant. Henry introduced me to Marco. This eleven-year old boy lived in Vrygrond, an area that none of the other participants were from. Marco was a soft-spoken boy who did not communicate clearly. During my foremost encounter with his teacher, while arranging for a time to meet with him, she announced that in her view he was lazy and that she did not know what was going on with his head. Shocked by the teacher's perspective, I was keen to hear from Marco. I also interviewed Marco's mom, Roni on a day when she worked night shift as a baker. This took place at their home.

### ***Meeting Kimmy***

The first time I encountered Kimmy was during school break. Many children were running about, interacting, while this twelve-year old stood there, not aloof, but also not forthcoming, drumming a beat on the fire hydrant at the top of a stairwell. This distant manner raised my curiosity and is how I initially came to know her. It left me feeling wary and uncertain about how to successfully proceed in building a relationship with her. Kimmy agreed to meet with me to find out more and discuss the research with me before assenting to contributing. Thus her response to the possibility of becoming a participant was more reluctant than other participants. After agreeing, she returned the consent signed by her mother without delay. However, after numerous efforts and failed arrangements, I accepted that Kimmy did not want me to interview her mother or another significant adult associated with her. The details of this will be explained in the findings section.

In summary, my approach to sample selection allowed the participants to play a part in shaping the sample. I explained the four sample selection criteria as detailed above to each of the participants. Since I anticipated that occupational choices would be a foreign term, I explained it in terms of activity choices once I had introduced the term. This facilitated ease of understanding. Also once I had attracted initial participants, I asked them to identify potential participants who lived in different parts of Lavender Hill or who they thought were different to them. The nuances of the socio-cultural interactions between peers thus came to light during the sample selection process. I was able to begin to gain insight into the participants at this early stage of the study. It

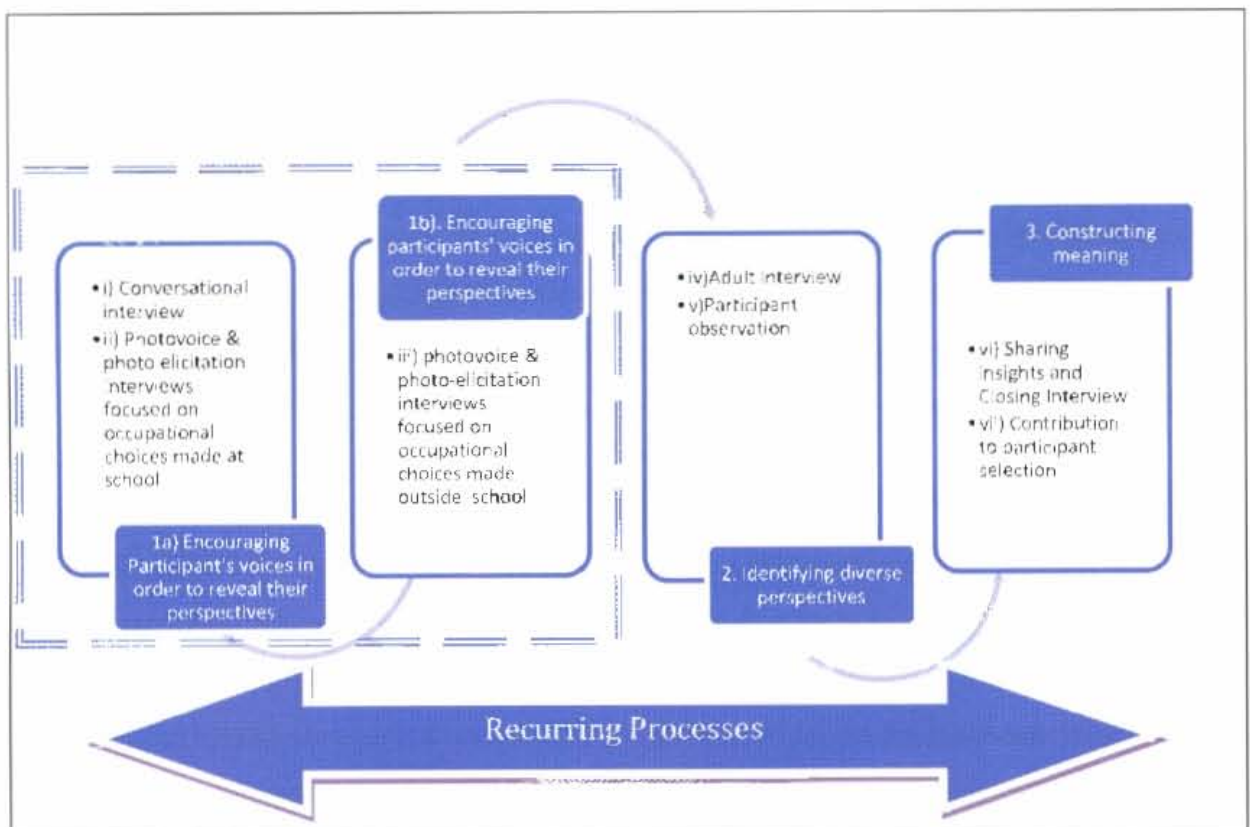
also facilitated selection of participants who may not otherwise have been accessed. The careful management of initiated relationships ensured that I had sufficient time and thinking space available to engage with each one in a manner suited to their situation. The implication of this was that by the time the participant was selected for the study, we had already built a positive rapport. The positive outcome was that at the stage where I formally started gathering data, I had started to develop some insights into the unique ways in which each of the participants interacted. This enabled me to tailor my language and actions to allow them to take the lead and thus ensure that depth was achieved during data gathering.

### **3.4.3 Method of data gathering**

The following section introduces the methods applied to gathering data. It proceeds to describe the ethnographic methods from the researcher's position and what was seen as the participants' responses. It shows that the systematic selection of the seven participants contributed to an enriching data generating experience. The positive impact that intentional nurturing of the relationships with participants, their friends and, to a lesser extent, their significant adults had on their contributions to the research is emphasised.

My beliefs in the value of participating with young adolescents guided the approach that I adopted to data gathering. Data gathering was an iterative process composed of a series of semi-structured interviews focusing on their narratives and descriptions of photographs that they had taken, and a participant observation session with each participant. The participant arranged for me to interview their parent or guardian. Thereafter, I engaged in a participant observation session with them. The steps of data collection are captured in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Processes (1-3) and steps (i-vi) of data gathering**



The processes of data gathering as reflected in Figure 3 involved three processes. These were: *Encouraging participants' voices in order to reveal their perspectives*; *Identifying different perspectives* and *Constructing meaning*. The processes of data gathering involved collecting data in particular ways. While the processes are represented separately in the figure, in reality they recurred and continued to shape the way forward in gathering data. The two parts of the first process were iterative and incrementally encouraged the participants to identify their occupational choices through the repetition of the methods of data gathering. The methods applied to achieve this included semi-structured interviews based on the participants' narratives of the occupational choices made at school and then the home as captured in photographs that they produced. The second process identified diverse perspectives on the participants' accounts. This process enhanced my critical perspective. Through interviewing the participants' parents, I was able to hear their views and contrast this with the perspectives that I obtained from the participants. I then had the opportunity to discuss this perspective with the participant before going on the participant observation session with them. Furthermore, during the participant observation sessions, I

developed insight into how the diverse perspectives coexisted. The last process of Constructing Meaning involved making meaning based on all that had been revealed. This involved sharing my interpretations with the participants and gaining their views on these. I concluded data gathering with a participant by giving him or her the opportunity to refer me to another potential participant. Throughout data gathering, I kept a reflective journal documenting my views and all interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Field records from participant observation sessions were also captured.

Engaging in the process of data gathering translated into at least fifteen formal encounters and countless informal interactions with each participant. Thus, although the steps of the process appear concise in Figure 3, they were drawn out over time and involved additional contact with participants. This was naturally defined by the participants in the setting. For instance, whenever I was at the school, even if I was there to see occupational therapy students or a different participant, participants would come and greet and speak to me. I used these exchanges to maintain rapport with participants or even to check more informally if my reading of social situations in Lavender Hill was accurate. Furthermore, participants' peer groups would often report to me on their whereabouts or even relay messages between us. Thus drawing on the participants' existing networks assisted with communicating with them. I found that these networks helped me to understand the atmosphere in which participants engaged in occupations. The attention that I placed on managing the intersubjective aspects of my relationships with participants and their networks ensured that they trusted me. This, together with the careful navigation of the data gathering process ensured the rigour of the findings of this study. The following section describes in greater detail each of the processes of data gathering.

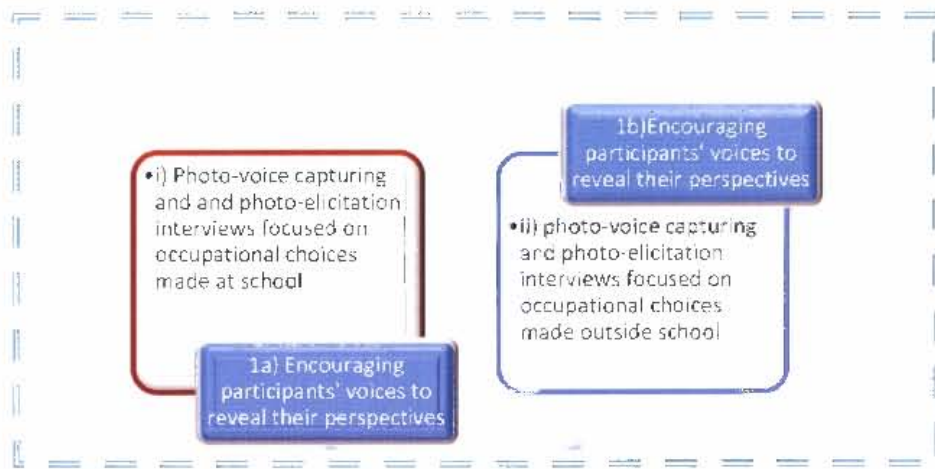
#### *3.4.3.1 Data gathering process 1: Encouraging participants' voices in order to reveal their perspectives*

##### ***Encouraging participant's voices in order to reveal their perspectives based on photos taken at school***

The following section describes the steps inherent to the first part of the process of encouraging participants' voices in order to reveal their perspectives.



**Figure 4: Encouraging participants' voices to reveal their perspectives based on photos captured at school**



Acknowledging that I needed to actively encourage young adolescents to reveal their occupational choices, I sought methods that allowed me to build the necessary trust and confidence. This was also important for the rigour of the study. Knowing from previous experience that personal pictures would stimulate their thinking about and expression of their occupational choices, I applied photovoice methods (Ewald and Lightfoot 2001; Mitchell et al., 2005). I recognised that it took time and practice for them to become familiar and comfortable with the use of the cameras and the photo-elicitation interviews. I thus designed the data gathering to allow them sufficient practice.

Once the participants returned their consent forms and granted their assent, they were engaged in what seemed like an informal discussion. An easy, open approach was taken as they were initially asked to simply speak about themselves and any activities that came to mind. This conversational manner of conducting interviews allowed for turn taking when talking, but required that I listened for cues that I could follow up. The participants spoke superficially and generally about themselves at this stage.

However, this conversational interview offered them the opportunity to test how their opinions would be received. This was achieved by paying attention to what they thought they would capture in their photos. This attentive listening had a positive impact of respecting the participant's authentic contribution. By showing interest in what they said, I was able to communicate that I was an interested adult researcher. This interest and my role as a learner was repeatedly expressed, giving the participant



further discussion. Negotiating dates to proceed communicated a mutual responsibility in the process and fostered trust.

Drawing on the participatory and analytic approach to photovoice methods, participants had a powerful platform from which to share their views on the occupational choices that they had captured during the photo-elicitation interviews. I actively sought to facilitate openness to discussing and managing thoughts, feelings and actions related to the content and process of capturing the photographs. Participants related feeling excited, anxious, uncertain, or determined to capture images. Their and others' familiarity with, and access to, cameras influenced these feelings. Furthermore, events in and response(s) from people in the participant's social context to the introduction of the camera influenced the data collection process. This had to be reflected upon when the cameras were returned and continuously during the process. Once the photos were developed, I returned on the agreed date and time to interview the participant based on the photos taken at school. Herein lay another time-consuming aspect of this research process. This is so because, in some instances I would return to find that on that day, perhaps without prior notice, the school had been dismissed early or the participant was absent. At these times, I returned on another day.

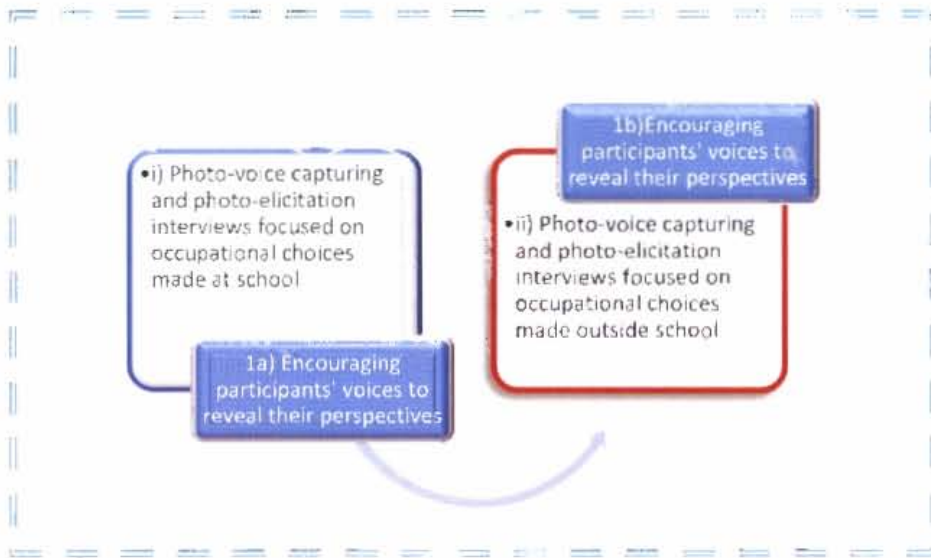
Participants were presented with the photographs and asked to discuss them in order of their preference. They selected and sequentially discussed each photograph. During this photo-elicitation interview, participants did not immediately show the skill to articulate their views succinctly. It was mistaken to expect that merely creating a space where they express their views would lead to them sharing their opinions. I was tasked with considering how to facilitate this opportunity so as to create an optimal environment for sharing. Participants were patiently asked to explain the reasons for taking the photograph, what was depicted and perhaps how this related to the choices that they had made. I listened to the participants and generated questions based on the information offered by them. I sought to explore the participant's different views on the various aspects of the photograph. The interpretations of the photo expressed in the interview allowed for the image to be understood within the context in which it was captured. Consequently, their descriptions of their chosen activities included discussions about many of their peers. It was impossible to predict or negotiate for written consent from all those who would be present when the participant decided to capture an experience. Through gaining verbal assent from people included in the

photographs, I relied on the participants to dialogue with others about the photos that they wanted to capture. This meant that, for example, persons besides the participants and unknown to me would be included in photos. This person unknown to me would naturally be discussed during the interview when participants reflected on their photographs. I thus learnt about the participants' occupational choices, their associates and their particular occupational choices. This required that I acknowledged that participants may have made interpretations about events or circumstances that they would have been peripheral to, but still part of. Furthermore, the way in which the participants captured the photographs and negotiated access to the camera offered insights into the intersubjective expectations between young adolescents in Lavender Hill. During these interviews, I had to maintain awareness of my assumptions related to the photographs and ask questions related to this. This enabled me to fully explore their views, especially those that may have been limited by my assumptions. My expressed curiosity into their photographs aroused their eagerness to share information about their occupational choices. Participants were able to experience the encouraging nature of this listening and through this grew in confidence to share their ideas and thinking. The significance of images was uncovered by focusing on inquiring what the participant's intention and interpretation of the photograph was. This provided further validation of the importance attached to the participants' perspectives. It also helped to cue them to the research process. To complete this layer of the data gathering process with a participant required about three forty-five minute interviews. Since data analysis was initiated during the data gathering phase, I had the opportunity to share my interpretations with participants and gain their views on this. This member checking facilitated further exploration of the data, enhancing the study's credibility.

Once the first round of photos was explored, the participant was issued with a disposable camera for a negotiated period of between one and two weeks. However, some participants used an extended period of a month. During this time, they took photos of themselves engaging in activities outside of school. At the end of this process, participants were given a copy of their set of photographs. The following section describes the second part of the process of encouraging participants' voices in order to reveal their perspectives.

***Encouraging participants' voices in order to reveal their perspectives based on photos taken outside of school***

**Figure 5: Component 1b of encouraging participants' voices**



My intention was for participants to have the opportunity to apply the method at school and thereafter, in their community. It was assumed that they made occupational choices in both of these environments. Undoubtedly, I was interested in their occupational choices, no matter where this occurred. However, I held the view that the school was a controlled environment and could offer a measure of safety during their first encounter. Furthermore, this opportunity offered them practical insight into what they would have to do once they took the photographs in the community. In essence, it offered an experience-based understanding of their roles in the research. Upon issuing the next camera to the participant, they usually shared their plans for the next week and highlighted moments that they anticipated they would capture. It appeared that they spontaneously followed the format initiated during the conversational interview. This created another opportunity to add to the researcher's field notes, providing a dense audit trail of the study. The researcher once again arranged a suitable time to collect and print the film before the photo-elicitation interview. The format followed during the interviews in the two parts of this process of data gathering was the same. This meant that the participant was familiar with the method and this contributed to his/her confidence in sharing their perceptions and thinking. I noticed this confidence in the manner that participants selected the photos to discuss and also in the depth of the

discussion during the interviews. Participants were able to share their thoughts openly and direct discussions related to various aspects of their experiences, perceptions and decisions. As a result of the depth of information that the participant wanted to share, their inability to concentrate for prolonged periods and the time available at or after school, this process occurred over about four to six interview sessions. The length of the sessions was dependent on logistical factors, including the participant's endurance for reflection. It allowed the researcher to uncover and experience the ambiguities of communication, interpretation and experiences as communicated by the participants. The amount of time spent engaging with participants assisted in building solid relationships with them.

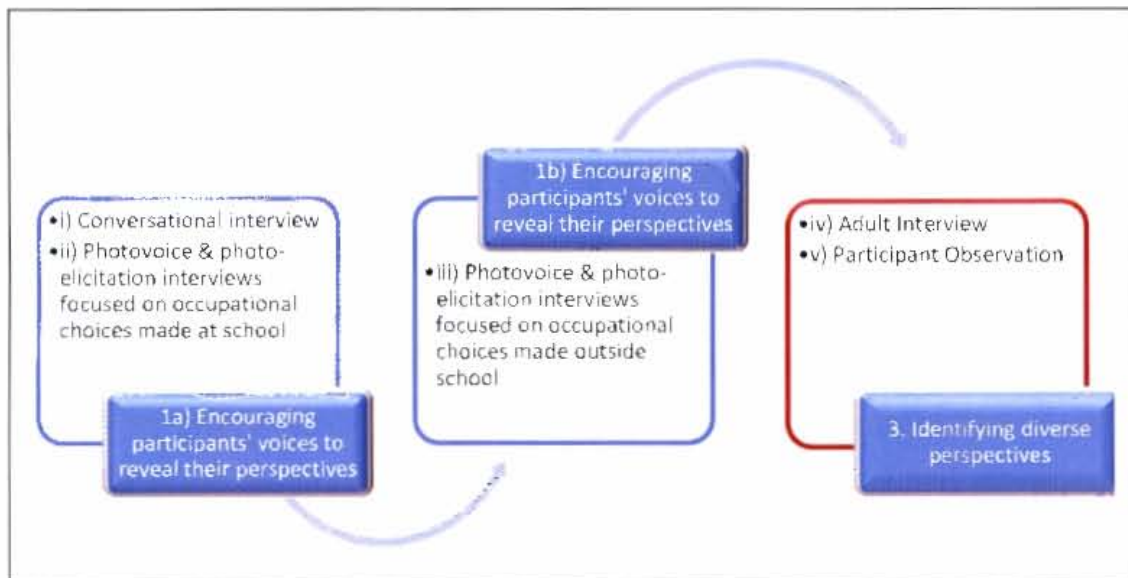
When participants took the cameras home, further examples of the camera as a resource within the social context emerged. These included participants allowing friends to use the camera for themselves. Most participants had some photographs that their friends had taken or of their friends' occupational choices. One participant, Godwin, however had given the camera to a friend and had an entire set belonging to this friend. In this instance, prior to the prints of the friend's photos being given to them, Godwin chose to share his insights into these photographs. He explained that he had been party to creating the images. The opportunity and success at discussing the photos vicariously reaffirmed his ability to take photos himself. He accepted the opportunity to have a second chance with enthusiasm. Interestingly, his stories revealed a part of his life and insights into the community that may not have been uncovered if he had not shared the camera with his friend. Consequently, he needed a second opportunity to have the camera in order to 'use it himself'. Another participant, Kimmy decided to sell the prints to friends at two rand per photo. This aspect of her participation in the research thus evolved into a means of income-generation for her. Her view of using the opportunity to sell the photographs made for an intriguing discussion during the interviews. It illustrated one of her ways of making occupational choices.

Another aspect that emerged when participants took the cameras home was the tension about 'who controls the camera'. These participants related that their parents wanted to advise them on how best to use the camera and would not always allow them to do as they judged best. This tension was managed by encouraging the participants to respectfully express their ability to perform the task independently to those concerned. One of the strategies used was to use the researcher's positional power as an adult. Clive

advised me on what to tell the concerned adult, namely his mother, and then orchestrated the opportunity for me to casually meet her. Through this, he was able to successfully gain control over the camera at home.

### *3.4.3.2 Identifying diverse perspectives*

**Figure 6: Identifying diverse perspectives during data gathering**



At the end of the previous process, I reminded the participant that the next step was for me to interview an adult that they identified as significant to them. I emphasised that this was their choice and that the information shared during previous interviews would not be divulged. Participants were mostly keen to arrange this meeting. Since Kimmy was very reluctant I did not interview an adult associated with her (more information related to this will be presented in the next chapter). For the rest, once the participant agreed, I arranged a suitable time. I usually went home with them or if the adult was working, then they gave me the adult's contact information and I made the necessary arrangements. The six participants allowed me to interview their mothers. In the instances where the mothers were not working, the participants would leave me at home with their mother after taking me there. I independently met Richard and Monash's mothers at their places of work. All the mothers were asked to give their consent prior to being interviewed.

The participant was given feedback on the interview with the adult when I next saw them. I used this opportunity to follow up on questions that arose as a result of the interview and answer questions that they had. At this stage, I discussed the possibility

and practicality of accompanying the participant for an afternoon or few hours as they went about participating in occupations. Participants were asked to discuss this with their peers as I was respectfully aware that their time spent after school may not have been on their own. The participants responded positively. Prior arrangements for the observation session mostly fell through and I was left to seize the moment whenever participants invited me. This meant that I had to be flexible with my time and orchestrate this based on the participant's availability. With all of the participants this took at least two occasions of arriving at the school or agreed meeting place to find that the observation could not take place due to different practicalities. These included that the participant had had a change of plans or again that the school had been dismissed early. I persevered until we found a more suitable time. This was possible with all of the participants.

Since it was also nearing the end of the research process and not wanting to compromise the relationship that had been established, I gently reminded the participant of the process and limited time ahead. On the afternoon of the observation, I usually drove the participant home and then parked my car as directed by the participant. I then engaged with the participant, following them in whatever they did. It usually involved walking with the participant, observing and talking, discussing as we went along. I took care to dress in a casual manner common to the way people in Lavender Hill dressed. This was usually wearing jeans, t-shirt and tackies.<sup>2</sup> I took a digital camera along and used my discretion and the participant's guidance to capture moments as they unfolded. This participant observation session gave me an opportunity to visit places and observe some of the occupations and occupational choices that they would have described during the photo-elicitation interviews. These observation sessions allowed me to have some firsthand experience of the contexts where they made occupational choices. This contributed to my ability to analyse and provide a thick description of their occupational choices.

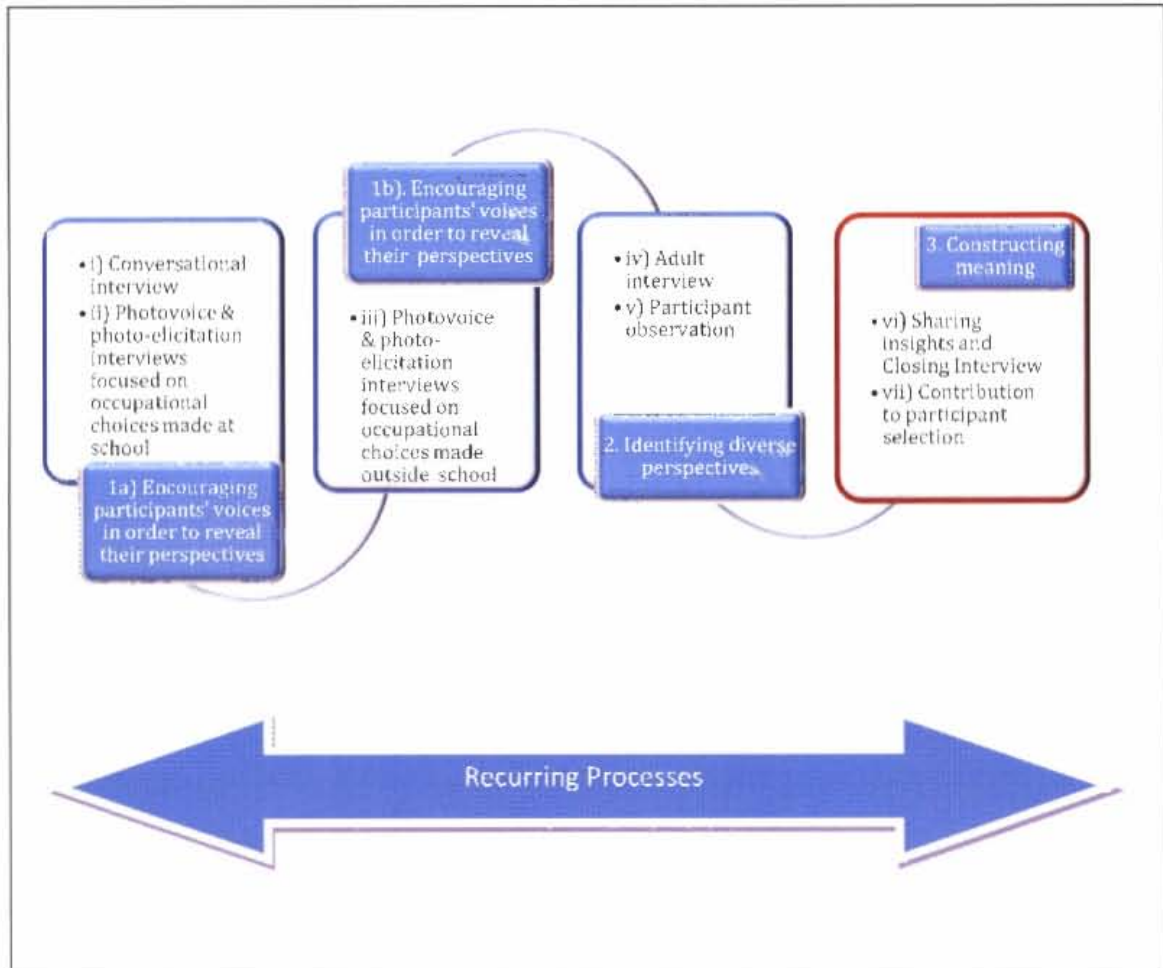
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2. Tackies is a term referring to an athletic shoe designed for sporting activities (Wikipedia, 2010c).



### 3.4.3.3 Constructing meaning

**Figure 7: Constructing meaning during data gathering**



Whilst this process of data gathering is represented as the last in Figure 7, it was embedded in the overall data gathering process. This is because constructing an understanding of the young adolescents' occupational choices occurred incrementally and recurred throughout the processes of data gathering. Its presence manifested in the questioning and testing of various interpretations as they emerged. However, towards the end of data gathering, I presented the participant with my overall understanding of the key issues that had emerged.

Following the observation session, I returned for a final interview with the participant. Here we viewed the photographs taken during the observation session and provided clarity on any questions that either of us had. Participants used this

opportunity to discuss requests that they had and reflected on their overall experience of participating in the research. This discussion also served to inform and clarify interpretations made. The outcome of the meaning construction was that particular insights into the participant's occupational choices were constructed. Eventually the construction of meaning came together during the analysis of the data and the identification of the theme describing the nature of the participant's occupational choices and the factors that influenced these. This approach to checking interpretations of data with the participants meant that an in-depth member-checking was possible during and at the end of the data gathering and analysis processes of the study.

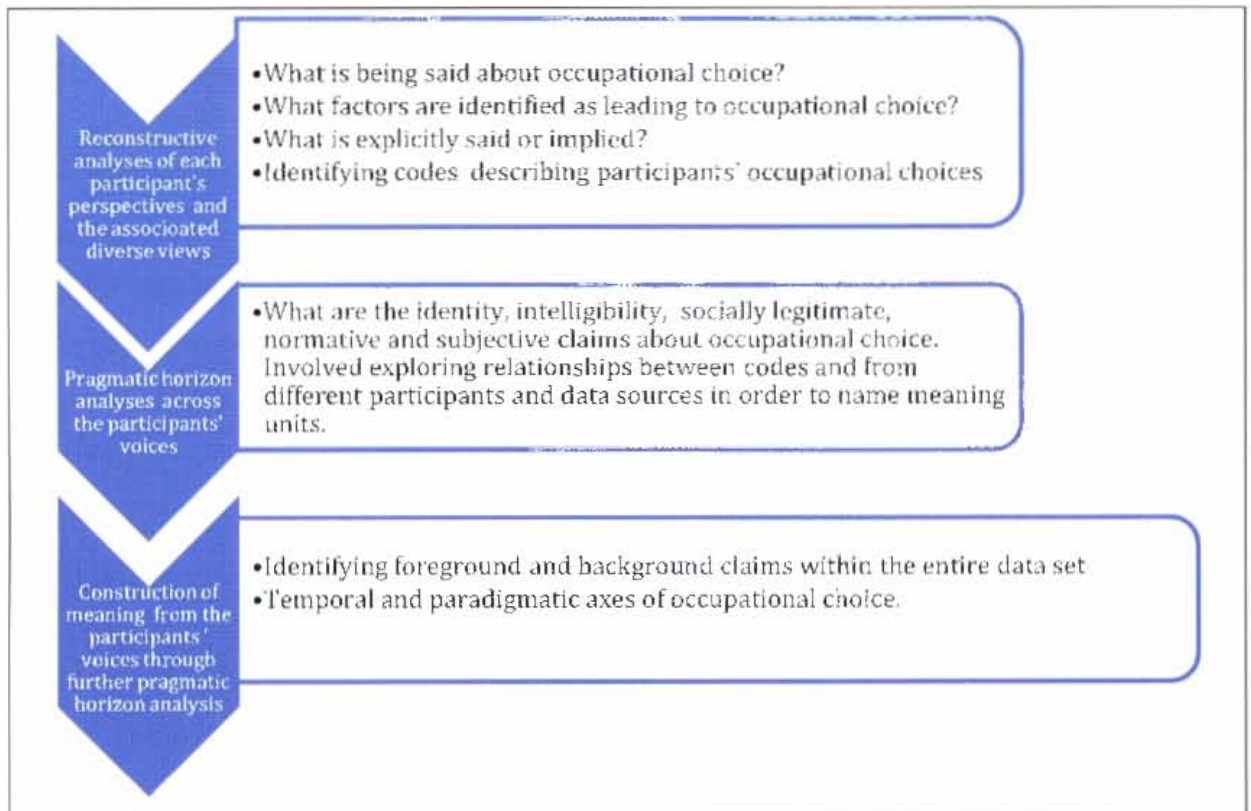
During the final part of this interview, I offered the participant the opportunity to share any details they wanted to add about their occupational choices or comments they had regarding their participation. This allowed participants to expose any insecurities or concerns that they had and ensured that they did not feel exposed or violated by the research. They then assisted with advising on recruiting new participants.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

The analysis of the data occurred in stages corresponding to the gathering of data. The following figure (Figure 8) captures the progression of data analysis.



**Figure 8: The progression of data analysis**



In this study, I adapted Carspecken's (1996) approach to reconstructive and paradigmatic horizon analysis in order to interpret the data. Application of QSR Nvivo (QSR International Pty Ltd, 1996-2003) computer software package assisted me with managing the data. Data analysis occurred incrementally and involved three phases. Figure 8 illustrates the three phases as they occurred sequentially and simultaneously. This was possible since the phases were applied incrementally throughout data gathering. Following this procedure assisted me in adopting a systematic approach to data analysis.

The **first, reconstructive phase of data analysis** entailed the exploration and examination of each of the participants' perspectives and the associated diverse views. Given the process oriented nature of data gathering, I initiated data analysis after the first few contacts with each participant. At this stage, I noted my preliminary impressions concerning the participant's occupational choices. Once I had completed data gathering, I proceeded to read through the transcribed interviews, highlighting what the participants said and how they described their occupational choices. I also extracted what they implied from what they had said about their occupational choices.

Through undertaking several readings of the sets of data for each participant, I began to appreciate and ascribe codes identifying the occupational choices and the factors shaping these. I continued to identify and code what each participant said about their occupational choices, where they made occupational choices and what sort of events preceded and followed their occupational choice. I contrasted my prior understanding of young adolescents' occupational choices with the understandings of occupational choice being revealed through coding. Cautious not to impose my meaning on the data, I used this understanding to further examine and explicate the claims that participants made about their occupational choices. I discussed these codes with a peer debriefer who had experience with qualitative research and practised occupational therapy with young adolescents. The peer debriefer interrogated the codes and questioned my reasoning. This sparked me to think of further interpretations and affirmed aspects of my emerging understanding. The low levels of inference made in the codes at this stage and the claims noted formed the foundation for the next phase in data analysis.

The **second phase** involved adapted **pragmatic horizon data analysis** (Carspecken, 1996). The pragmatic aspect of this analysis is derived from regarding action, rather than perception as primary to experience. Added to this, meaningful action is assumed to be composed of intersubjective assumptions related to the positions in which the acts are perceived. The reference to horizon draws on Habermas's pragmatic theory, which acknowledges that perceptions take on form in relation to foreground and background horizons (Carspecken, 1996). In this study, I built on the first phase of the analysis by reading the complete data set as it had been coded into meaning units. From this reading of the analysis, I sought to identify the conventional claims that participants made about their occupational choices. These claims related to what their occupational choices were as well as the factors that shaped these choices. During this process I remained cognisant of the general possible meaning fields that existed. Where appropriate, I gathered the codes into categories. I thus identified and labelled the tacit meaning associated with the previously coded meaning units. Considering myself akin to the participants during data generation and taking part in their intersubjective processes, assisted me in identifying the tacit meanings. I also detected the components that were emphasised and those that were not. I analysed for the inferences, similarities, contrasts and hierarchical inclusion in the participants' accounts of their occupational choices. To do this required that I probe speech that they

used and the roles that they assumed in order to make their occupational choices. Another aspect of this phase was to identify the possible reasons that participants attributed to their occupational choices. This entailed exploring the foreground and background reasons offered. During encounters with participants, I was able to test the interpretations of the background claims in order to gain their confirmation. I engaged with a critical and experienced researcher as a peer debriefer who read samples of the analysis and interrogated the meanings that I attributed and investigated any instances of partiality. Through this process I was able to discursively identify the implicit meanings and progress to identify the categories of the study. The member checking and peer debriefing enhanced the credibility of the findings.

The **last phase** of analysis involved considering the **implicit and explicitly communicated meanings** as integrated expressions in the categories and previously identified meaning units. This required careful examination of the foreground and background horizons that may have influenced the participants' occupational choices. It included considering the temporal location of the claims made about occupational choice. This exposed the contextual position of participants' occupational choices and the intersubjective qualities of this position. Through this process I refined the categories and identified the theme of the study. Again engaging with the experienced researcher as a peer debriefer, she read samples of the analysis at this stage with the intention of challenging the clarity, degree of bias and appropriateness of my inferences. I responded to this critique by further clarifying some claims and thus strengthening the verisimilitude of the claims made.

Given that knowledge is produced in social contexts (Carspecken & Apple, 1992) where issues of power and ethics coexist, the approach to data analysis complemented the sensitivity with which these issues were negotiated during data generation. Examining the components of the data and reflecting on the cogent messages about the nature and influences on occupational choice resulted in the identification of one theme, consisting of two categories. These will be presented in the next chapter. It is emphasised that the propositions put forward were tested with participants' data gathering and a peer debriefer and were confirmed to reflect the important issues related to the participants' occupational choices. Furthermore, the method of inquiry described in this chapter together with the findings described in the next, reflects both

the affective and cognitive components of the participants' occupational choices. This further contributed to the verisimilitude of this study.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

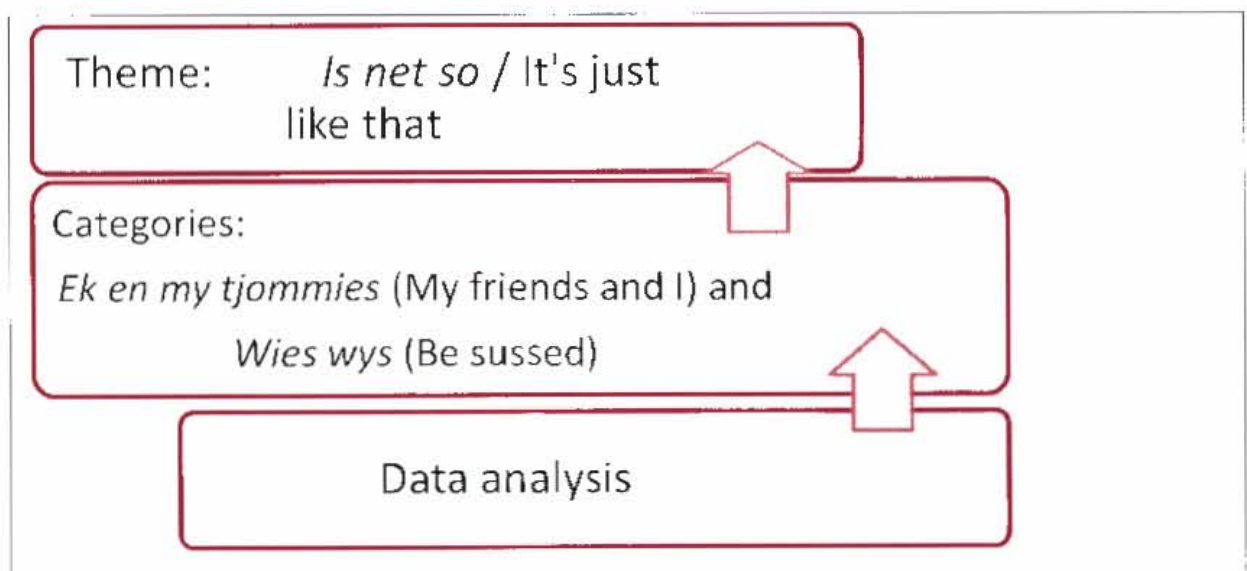
This chapter described the researcher's prolonged engagement in the setting and during data generation. An audit trail was offered through providing this comprehensive account of the method of inquiry, as informed by the detailed field records. It distilled the processes and steps of data gathering and offered insights into the way that the credibility and rigour of the study was ensured. The reflexive style of engaging adopted during this study contributed to the verisimilitude and trustworthiness of the study. While the reflexivity during data generation was explicated, its outcome and continuation will become evident in the propositions relating to young adolescents' occupational choices in the next chapter.

# Findings

## 4.1 Introduction

The analysis of all of the participants' voices revealed the tensions and contradictions in the participants' occupational choices. This together with the analysis of the diverse perspectives gleaned from participant observation sessions and interviews with participants' parents, contributed to the meta-construction of meaning. The theme, *Is net so* (It's just like that) emerged as capturing the nature, and influences on, the participants' occupational choices. This theme is composed of two categories, namely, *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) and *Wies wys* (Be sussed). The relationships between the phases of data analysis, the study categories and theme are visually displayed in Figure 9.

**Figure 9: Relationships between data analysis, categories and theme**



The theme and its two categories are described in greater detail in this chapter. The chapter concludes with summative comments on the theme.

## 4.2 Theme: *Is net so* (It's just like that)

The paradox of the participants' occupational choices was captured in the expression, *Is net so* (It's just like that). This is a colloquial Cape Flats phrase usually invoked to testify that someone unequivocally affirms the viewpoint being put forward as true, despite the possibility that different views may have been equally valid. In this study, it communicates the contradictions defining and influencing the occupational choices of the participants. It conveys that participants' occupational choices were expected to be as they were and were accepted in this way without contestation. Features of their concurring occupational choices reflected the legacy of apartheid in South Africa.

Participants presented their occupational choices as inevitable. Even though they may have been aware of alternate occupational choices, they expressed being less attracted to these. All of the participants recognised that their opportunities were limited in Lavender Hill. Likewise, they were attracted to the occupational choices within the boundaries of these limitations and then did not question the limitations. Instead they continued to make occupational choices reflecting the limitations of resources in Lavender Hill. One of the factors leading to the acceptance was the legacy of apartheid.

While the reality of South Africa's liberation from apartheid is true, the study findings showed that it is equally true that participants were still experiencing the aftermath of apartheid ideology. An illustration of this was in the participants' use of language. Their expressions contained phrases such as *die boere*, to refer to the police. This term was used in a derogatory and fearful way by people during apartheid to refer to the paramilitary-like police officers aligned with the racist rule under apartheid. Despite that, participants were all born after legislated apartheid, yet they continued to use this term. Similarly, their language expressed their constrained mindset. *Jy hou vir jou wit* (you're behaving like a white) was often used to tease or ask friends why they were behaving in a snobbish way. The notion of whiteness as being esteemed and eloquent was noticeable. I even encountered that my identity was often questioned in

relation to this during the research. The following description from my research journal reflects an interaction during participant observation with Monash.

While we were driving, Monash and her friends were commenting to each other about the child car-seat in the back of my car. They were saying that this made me different to them, probably white. As they continued, I explored why this was so. I felt offended and wanted to get them to see that I was also coloured, just like them. We were the same and our lives could be more alike. But in that moment today, they were focused on the difference. So I asked them why they thought I was white. Their assumptions emerged...because I drove a car, spoke English as my first language, I used a baby car-seat and had a job at the university!! Ouch. I immediately explained that I am coloured and then explained that even as a coloured person I could do all of the things above and that they could do the same. Monash and her friends were taken by surprise and seemed to be thinking about what I said. They then reflected, alarmingly, that my understanding of Cape Flats colloquialisms proved my colouredness. How absurd and sad that we had to have a conversation like this. (Reflective journal, 2006).

Participants questioned my identity, especially my race. This added to my impression that traces of the apartheid ideology where participants viewed their identities as inferior to whiteness remained evident. Further examples of the influence of this ideology will be identified in the categories of the study.

In summary, the inevitability of the participants' occupational choices and the influence of apartheid ideology prevailed. The categories of the study, as described in the next section, explain this in more detail. The category, *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) revealed the intricacy with which young adolescents implicitly negotiated their occupational choices. The participants and their *tjommies* (friends) did not question what happened, but did what was done and known to be done in Lavender Hill. The peer groups operated as a social network orchestrating and regulating the participants' occupational choices. The category *Wies wys* (Be sussed) describes how the participants' occupational choices were further riddled with contradictions between the occupational choices that they valued as acceptable and those that they actually chose. In each of these categories, the individual, group and community of Lavender Hill persistently and inherently shaped the participants' occupational choices.



#### 4.2.1 Category: *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I)

The category *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) describes the significance of the way that the *tjommies* (friends), as a group co-constructed the participants' occupational choices. The impact of the peer group as a social network was inherent in this. For ease of reading, the features characterising and influencing peer groups are presented individually. However, the data analysis revealed that these features coexisted and never presented in isolation. Figure 10 identifies the key features of the category, *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I).

FIGURE 10. DISTINCT FEATURES OF *EK EN MY TJOMMIES* (MY FRIENDS AND I)



It is illustrated that the participants, referring to *Ek* (I), in relation to their *tjommies* (friends) influenced the participants' occupational choices. The participants and their friends sought and created opportunities to make occupational choices through their individual and group involvement. The nature of this involvement rested on their knowledge of the occupations in their context, that is, the community of Lavender Hill: being alert, spontaneous, provocative and caring in their occupational choices. All of this involved sharing resources. The next section describes further aspects of this category and its features.



I recognised the presence and value of peers as a social network (figure 10) during data gathering. For example, learners recognised me as associated with participants at the schools. After signing in with the bambanani<sup>3</sup> and parking my car, I would be greeted by my participants who may have seen me or were told of my arrival by others. Alternatively, I would be welcomed by my participant's acquaintances. These associates would eagerly offer to call or fetch their friend. As they did this, they started reporting on what had been happening since my last visit. In this way I learnt that becoming familiar with a participant meant getting to know their peers. It allowed me to appreciate the camaraderie that existed within and between peers in groups.

The companionship between friends was present even in the tone and language that participants used to describe their friends. It involved creating particular nicknames for one another. However these names, rather than just being endearing, often poked fun at the person. For example, Richard was called *Pitte*. This name refers to the stones or pips of fruit, and was assigned based on the elliptical shape of his head. As my relationship with participants grew, the progression to calling them by their nicknames was natural. However, knowing that their nicknames were also a form of teasing left me feeling uncomfortable with calling someone like Richard, *Pitte*. This exposed the humiliation and disrespect that coexisted in the alliance between peers and the way that the group used *gamtaal*. Consequently I called him by his birth name. However, if I wanted other young adolescents to know who I was referring to, I resorted to calling him *Pitte*. This highlighted the power that the peer group and the culture of Lavender Hill had on how participants were identified. Their friendships entailed seeking spaces and opportunities for occupational engagement and occupational choices.

Looking for opportunities for occupational engagement involved considering the various occupational choices that were available (figure 10). The places where these occupational choices were made became apparent from the participants' narratives of their photos. The photo below captured by Monash showed the site, that is the streets of Lavender Hill, where participants frequently made occupational choices. From the

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3. Bambanani – community members who receive a minimal wage for playing a security role at the school. These posts were created by the Dept. of Community Safety and Security in response to the high level of crime and violence in particular communities. The Bambanani workers operate the school gate and require that every visitor signs a register.

participants' accounts it was noticeable that the physical surroundings of Lavender Hill influenced the places where participants made occupational choices.

**Photo 1: Streets of Lavender Hill as site for occupational choice**



Attention is drawn to the young adolescents grouped at the stop sign on the far left. Clusters of adolescents spent time together, standing in conversation like this as a chosen occupation or making occupational choices. This environment shaped the participant's views of what the usual and accepted occupational choices were, but the peer group affirmed or swayed the participant's occupational choices. The time that they spent together, discussing their occupational choices or making occupational choices underscored their fluency with each other's occupational choices. The choice to participate in an occupation was shaped as the opportunities unfolded. This explained one way in which participants sought and found opportunities in Lavender Hill. Another way that they found opportunities was to create their opportunities to engage in occupations.

The following story illustrates how the peer group as a sub-group in Lavender Hill created opportunities. One of Marco's friends related a story about a boat that he and a group of friends had found at a nearby rubbish tip. Having found the large, inflatable boat, they decided that they would walk along the highway to a nearby petrol station

where they would pump up the boat. After the labour-intensive 30 minute walk, sharing the carrying of the boat as a team, they finally arrived to inflate the boat. They planned to use the boat to play at a nearby vlei. However after arriving at the petrol station, a woman offered them R50 to buy the boat. The group of friends decided to sell it to her as they were attracted to the money. When walking back to Lavender Hill they spoke about the missed opportunity that they gave up in exchange for the R50. They immediately returned to the petrol station, returning the R50 and getting the boat back. Instead they went to the vlei and had fun sailing and hiding between the reeds. They enjoyed the afternoon, deflated the boat and carried it back to Lavender Hill. The emergent way that this occupational choice came about while they were scouting around at the rubbish tip highlighted that they were alert to opportunities for occupational choices. Being alert to opportunities to make occupational choices resulted in the peer group discussing the lost opportunity and deciding to make a different occupational choice. This illustrates the peer group's resourcefulness in seizing opportunities when they noticed that these were accessible (figure 10). Seizing opportunities occurred against a background of tight-knit relationships between peers. During participant observation with Kimmy, this was illustrated.

While fetching Kimmy's two-year old sister, Monique from crèche after school, I sat waiting with two of Kimmy's friends while she went to fetch Monique inside. I was familiar with one of her friends, Rastum, as he was a member of an occupational therapy group that I had previously facilitated. This was my second encounter with Joe, her other friend. Rastum and Joe revealed that Monique was not Kimmy's sister, but was actually Kimmy and Rastum's child. With disbelief, I thought that this group of peers were pretending. However, they convinced me by asking a third friend who joined them and who did not know that they had told me. He confirmed that Monique was actually Kimmy's child and that she had her when she was eleven. It then occurred to me that it was not incidental that Monique shared a name with Kimmy's best girlfriend. She and her then eleven-year old friend, Rastum, the father of the child, could not raise Monique and instead allowed Kimmy's mom to adopt her child. Only her closest circle of friends knew about this. Peers were let into secrets and looked after these without prejudice or judgement. So, while peers knew a lot about each other, this was not because they necessarily discussed their circumstances in detail, but rather that, through doing things together, they were aware of what had happened to their friends. This way of engaging

nurtured patterns of occupational engagement that was associated with the *tjommies* (friends) as a group. Part of the pattern of occupational engagement was that participants self-created and used available spaces and opportunities whenever possible.

Peers expected that each individual group member would be alert to opportunities for occupational choices. This alertness was observable in the way that they interacted with each other. The intersubjective expectation was that participants would interact with their peers in a *wakker* (alert) manner. The kinds of opportunities they sought were opportunistic and spontaneous. The following example illustrates this. In the next photo Clive captured a friend dancing, elaborating that he had had a turn thereafter. The individuals in this group created the occupational choice based on their knowledge that their peers were interested in breakdancing and that they could use the available space on the school stairwell landing for this.

**Photo 2: Seizing opportunities for occupational choice**



With reference to photo 2, Clive described the positive experience of dancing with his friends:

*Clive: Is lekker vir jou, jy voel, in jou hart voel jy lekker, maar buite dink jy hulle voel nie lekker nie.*

*Roshan: Hoekom sal hulle nie lekker voel nie?*

*Clive: Omdat jy dink is junk vir jou maar dis lekker vir jou, nou sê hulle is junk vir jou.*

*Roshan: So jy worry oor hoe hulle vir jou sien?*

*Clive: Ja maar is kwaai het hulle gesê.*

*Roshan: Is dit, toe hoe voel dit toe hulle vir jou sê dis kwaai?*

*Clive: Ek het lekker gevoel.*

(Clive: It's nice for you, you feel, in your heart you feel nice but outside you think they don't feel nice.

Roshan: Why would they not feel nice?

Clive: Because you think it's junk for you, but it's nice for you, now they will say it's junk for you.

Roshan: So you worry about how they see you?

Clive: Yes, but it is great, they said it.

Roshan: Is it, how did you feel when they said it's great?

Clive: I felt good.)

Clive made reference to the way that the group perceived him and expressed their opinions of his dance skills. This opportunity to dance meant trying out a new move or showing off a practised one. He described feeling apprehensive, but later happy, given their feedback. He made reference to *hulle* (them) since it was not just an individual's opinions that mattered, but the group's view. Their interaction created a meaningful experience that contributed to his decision to engage in dancing. The decisions to participate were made when the opportunity was seized during break-time. It also meant that Clive and his friends were aware of each other's interests and dance skills and that this space could be used to exercise this. Clive implicitly seized the available opportunity to participate in this occupation. It appeared that once they began to participate, the rest of his and his friends' participation was shaped by what transpired in the moment. This involved making occupational choices. It also meant that through their occupational engagement, they had the capacity to shape their ongoing occupational choices. The spontaneous way in which their occupational choices unfolded left adults, such as the parents whom I interviewed, judging the participants to be taking chances (reflected as being spontaneous in figure 10).

The participants would take any opportunity to test if they could access a probable occupational choice. This will be further explained in the next category. Parents saw this chance-taking as reckless and perceived participants to be irresponsible. I appreciated both the parents and participants' perspectives as I observed how participants attempted to access opportunities. The following example illustrates this.

On an afternoon when I participated as an observer with Kimmy and her friends, they spent time after school sitting around at Kimmy's house. After some time they decided to pursue negotiating with me to drive them to the nearby beach. They persuaded me that they often went to the beach, but usually would walk or hitch a ride with someone in the community (apparently often convincing them in a similar way to how they tried to convince me). The intention of their thinking seemed to look at how they could maximise their opportunity for enjoyment. Once they had achieved a possible route by convincing me to drive to the beach, the triumphant delight visible in their facial expressions was matched with their more relaxed acceptance of my presence. They participated as they wanted, regardless of my presence. They, that is Kimmy and her two friends, Rastum and Joe, and Kimmy's younger sister, Monique prepared to go to the beach with much excitement. They packed a bottle for Monique, Kimmy changed out of her school uniform and locked up the house. As we drove to the beach they recalled previous times when they had swum together. As we drove, they also commented on people they saw and things they knew about the community. At the beach, they felt like swimming, but had not brought costumes or towels. However they stripped down - the boys swam in their boxers and Kimmy in her boxers and t-shirt. They entrusted me to babysit Monique on the beach while they swam for about half an hour in the cold sea. Since they had not brought towels, they instead found a warm spot on the brick paving and lay there on their backs to dry. Whilst drying, they shared a tobacco cigarette. Participants thought about what they were doing while they were engaging or when they were anticipating that they would engage. As a group they persevered until they convinced me to drive to their desired destination. Participating in occupations involved regulating between their occupational choices in accordance with what was going on around them and their considerations of how they could contribute and benefit as individuals and as a group. Their considerations were influenced by their individual and collective desire to have fun. The dynamic interactions between the individual and peer group as a collective was noticeable during participant observation and from the participants' narratives of their occupational choices. A particular attitude underscored the way that individuals and the group functioned.



A pervasive, obstinate attitude characterised the participants' interactions with their peers. Photo 3, taken by Godwin of a younger child whom he sometimes played with, illustrated the attitude.

**Photo 3: Readily accessible attitude**



Godwin did not comment on the finger sign until I asked about it. He took this for granted and did not think it extraordinary. The cheekiness of her pose and the message that she sends may have been interpreted as disrespectful. This symbolic gesture also exposed the resistant position that participants readily had available. All participants described being able to *skel* (scold) back if and when they needed to. Marco, although usually quiet, described an instance where he assumed the position and acted accordingly.

*Marco: En toe, en toe slaat hulle hom nie.*

*Roshan: Wie slaan nie vir hom nie?*

*Marco: Dit was vyflaaities. Toe hulle nou vir hom slaat, toe keer ek af.*

*Roshan: "Okay" en hoe was dit vir jou toe dit gebeur het?*

*Marco: Dis alright [Mm], ons het niks gemaak nie.*

*Roshan: Hoe het jy vir hulle afgekeer?*

*Marco: Ek het daai laaitie geskel. Toe los hulle. Toe loop hulle en toe wil hulle hom weer slaat. Toe los hulle, toe roep ek my ander vriend, toe loop hulle weg.*

- (Marco: And then, and then they did not hit him.  
 Roshan: Who didn't hit him?  
 Marco: They were five youngsters. They wanted to hit him, so I averted this.  
 Roshan: Ok, and how was that for you when it happened?  
 Marco: It was alright. [Mm]. We didn't do anything.  
 Roshan: How did you avert it?  
 Marco: I scolded that youngster. Then they left it. Then they walked away and then they wanted to hit him again. Then they left it, then I called my other friend and then they walked away).

Marco was aware that this may have turned into a brawl. He carefully assessed the situation as it unfolded. He assumed an oppositional, resistant position and firstly scolded the other boys. When they continued to threaten to beat his friend up, he recognised that he may need more power to resist or would have to engage in the brawl if necessary. He thus called his friend as back-up to support him and this convinced the boys to not pursue the matter further. His learnt knowledge of how events could unfold contributed to his discernment. This illustrated the discernment of the occupational choice that was made during participation interfaced with the unfolding demands of the occupation that he was engaging in. In this scuffle, Marco prevented a real fight where his friend may have been physically assaulted and where Marco may have assaulted someone. The attitude with which he approached the occupational choices was defined by the common prevailing status of being *wakker* (alert). Being *wakker* (alert) as an attitude (figure 10) had a protective function in that it meant that participants would not be easily intimidated by their harsh realities.

The fast-paced interchanges demanded that they represent themselves with contextual clarity and confidence, or risk ridicule and a dismissive attitude. Contextual clarity referred to communicating using *gamtaal* (Cape Flats Afrikaans) and applying interpretations of locally expected occupational choices. Speaking in *gamtaal* (Cape Flats Afrikaans) afforded participants the use of a local language that could express occupational choices common to Lavender Hill in a way that was understood by people living there. Describing hand signs and symbols as a form of communication, Clive explained:

- Roshan: *So wat bedoel dit as jou vingers so is?*  
 Clive: *Is 'n ag sê hulle.*  
 Roshan: *Ag en wat bedoel 'n ag?*  
 Clive: *In die tronk en so.*



- Roshan: *O wat maak 'n mens in die tronk in?*  
Clive: *Vat goede af en so.*  
Roshan: *Vat goede af in die tronk in, wat anders is daar?*  
Clive: *Hulle skiet eerste en rob mense en so.*  
(Roshan: So what does it mean if your fingers are like that?  
Clive: It's an eight, they say.  
Roshan: Eight, and what does eight mean?  
Clive: In jail and like that.  
Roshan: Oh, what is the person doing in jail?  
Clive: Stealing things and so.  
Roshan: Stealing things in jail and what else is there?  
Clive: They shoot first and rob people and like that.)

Clive demonstrated his familiarity of the jail codes and the associated occupations. Likewise participants' occupational choices reflected the occupational choices familiar to people living in Lavender Hill. For example, all the female participants reflected on the poses depicted in their photographs and how this would be seen as sexy by others, especially by boys. This mimicked the conduct of many women living there. When boys posed they sought esteem by identifying with gang symbolism through showing gang signs.

**Photo 4: Identifying with gangs**



Godwin described the symbolism in Photo 4. He explained that their hand signs were symbols showing their identification, not membership with the notorious Cape Flats Americans gang. This identification did not mean that they were gang members or that they explicitly aspired to become part of the gangs. When explaining why they showed gang signs, one explanation was that it was so that they would not be seen as the opposition and thus as a threat by the gangsters. Being viewed as non-threatening by the gangsters served to protect them from possible harm. Also, showing the signs signified compliance and respect for the gangs and gangsters. Lastly, showing gang signs held positive social status and was seen as cool. These explanations were presented concurrently and were equally cogent for the participants. Participants positioned themselves as going between aspiring to have the elevated status of the gangster, and what they felt or thought they were morally obligated to do, given the negative stereotypes and actions associated with gangsters. However, as individuals and collectively as peer group members, participants portrayed gestures to identify with the commonly operating gangster identities and the symbolic capital associated with gangsters. Participants and their peer groups shared the experience and understanding of the tensions coupled with this sometimes hypocritical collective identification and so did not question one another.

An example of the way that the unquestioning manner impacted on the participants occupational choices was observed during participant observation with Godwin and his friends. They had gone walking in a nearby, more affluent neighbourhood. The houses in this area were built around a vlei. After walking for some time and winding our way in the lanes between houses, we were able to access the vlei. Appearing without consideration, the group of boys rolled down the grassy hill towards the water and then excitedly reflected on the fun they had rolling (photo 5).

**Photo 5: What a roll**



The boys then through some sticks and grass into the water and then each drifted in different directions. Godwin spotted a duck in the debris floating in the water. He excitedly called the rest of the group to come and see what he had found, knowing that this would be of interest to all. I captured photo 6, with Godwin and a friend investigating if the duck was alive, engaging in discussions about what might have happened to it.



**Photo 6: Intrigued in occupation**

Godwin and his friends were intrigued with the duck and spent about ten minutes just deciding what to do with it. After failed attempts to resuscitate it and being careful to only touch it with a stick, they decided that they would have to put it back into the water. They easily reached consensus on this and then proceeded to walk along the vlei. The ease with which they agreed to engage in this occupation contrasted with the tensions which were often part of the multifaceted background of the context to their occupational choices. Related to this background was the way that age and gender influenced the interaction between peers.

Boys and girls exerted power over younger children. This allowed them to make occupational choices that gave them the image of *being kwaai* (being cool). Being cool by teasing girls was also observed. Photo 7 shows Clive grabbing a girl to take a photo against her will.

**Photo 7: Doing what suits me**



When asked about it, he did not see it as a problem and laughed it off. This was of concern because of the subtle prevalence of potential gender violence. However, Clive's desire to look *kwaai* (cool) and do what he wanted implicitly moulded his occupational choice. Factors that influenced participants' evaluation of what was *kwaai* (cool) will be described in *Wies wys* (Be sussed). Still, forcing someone to do something against their will was a common feature of many of the participants' interactions. This provocative way of interacting was contrasted with the care existing within peer groups. An example of such care became apparent during participant observation with Godwin. His friend's six-year old brother had followed them when they went walking. He was not allowed to walk with them and they constantly scolded him, urging him to go back home. At the same time, they constantly checked on him and advised him on how to remain safe, each taking turns to make conversation with him. This showed that the desire to be *kwaai* (cool) could also be subsumed by their caring manner.

A final example of both the care and acceptance of the way that participants were, was revealed by Richard. Richard described having rats as a hobby. When asked about how he acquired the rats, he was able to describe how others caught the rats in the nearby bushes. His friends accepted that he was afraid of catching the rats and agreed to catch the rats and give him some. They interpreted and acted on his avoidance to catch

rats himself. This occurred without discussion about his fears. They made it possible for him also to have rats. The health hazard of this occupation was not raised by Richard, his friends or even adults. From the above descriptions, the value of the creation of a structure of associates as subgroup within the social hierarchy of Lavender Hill was noticeable. Peers engaged in occupations together and made similar occupational choices. Knowing that they made similar occupational choices and seeking opportunities together, extended to the way that participants then chose to share resources (Figure 10).

Participants as members of peer social networks used available opportunities to share resources to which they had access with their friends. All the participants demonstrated this in their use of their allocated research camera as a resource. The following narrative describes how this worked for Godwin. Godwin decided to give his opportunity to take photos to his close friend, Antonio. However, upon presentation of Antonio's photos, Godwin spoke with certainty about Antonio's occupational choices. He explained with ease what Antonio did, who he engaged with and where they engaged. Besides demonstrating Godwin's personal familiarity with Antonio as a peer group member, he expressed that they spent a considerable amount of time participating in occupations together. Consequently he was obliged to share his opportunity to access the camera with Antonio. Sharing resources strengthened their relationships within the social network and enabled more of their peers to access opportunities. Likewise, participants shared resources during occupational engagement, leading them to co-create opportunities to make occupational choices.

For example, Kimmy and her friends shared their resources and consequently co-created opportunities. She described how they pooled their money on a Friday afternoon so that they could binge drink that evening.

*Kimmy: Castle proe nie lekker nie.*

*Roshan: Is dit, so julle hou van die smaak van Black Label. En is daai twee bottels nou die enigste twee bottels wat julle nou op die dag gekoop het?*

*Kimmy: Ons het drie gekoop maar die anders was op.*

*Roshan: O ok, en waar kry julle die geld om dit te koop?*

*Kimmy: Ons sit by en dan koop ons.*

*Roshan: So hoe besluit julle want jy't daai dag geweet vandag gaan ons drink, so hoe besluit julle wanneer gaan julle drink?*

- Kimmy: Ons sal mos, ons het die photos Vrydag gevat, ons se Ma's pay mos Vrydag dan vat ons die photos.*
- Roshan: O ok dan gee hulle vir julle geld as hulle pay?*
- Kimmy: Ja.*
- (Kimmy: Castle (beer) does not taste nice.
- Roshan: Is that so, does your group prefer the taste of Black Label. And are those two bottles the only two bottles that you bought that day?
- Kimmy: We bought three, but the others were finished.
- Roshan: Oh, ok, and where did you get the money to buy it?
- Kimmy: We club together and then buy it.
- Roshan: So how do you decide (referring to the group of friends), because that day you knew that you were going to drink or how do you decide when you are going to drink?
- Kimmy: We will, we took the photos on Friday, our mothers get paid on a Friday, so then we took the photos.
- Roshan: Ok, then she gives you money when she gets paid?
- Kimmy: Yes.)

Kimmy's reference to 'Castle' showed her first-hand knowledge of different brands of alcoholic beverages. This shaped her occupational choices in that she chose specific brands and created the impression that she had access to financial resources to access various products. Further to this, the extent of her indulgence seemed to be determined by their fiscal resources as a collective participating in this occupation. Kimmy's mother financially supported her occupational choices by giving her money on a Friday. She did this not knowing that Kimmy would use this to participate in an occupation that she disapproved of. However, it was surprising that she did not seem to discern where or how Kimmy spent her money. For Kimmy, having this money determined the extent to which she could engage in the occupation. That is, how much beer would be available for her to drink. This emphasised that her decisions and actions as an individual impacted on the group. Through allowing her to be out late and giving her money, her mother unknowingly made a substantial contribution to ensuring that this occupation was possible. This exemplified the way that individuals and the peer group interfaced when sharing resources (Figure 10) and making occupational choices. Similar to the exchange between the individuals and their peer group, there was also a relationship with individuals in the community.

Kimmy used her knowledge of the community to collude with her friends and some adults in order to successfully hide her alcohol use from her mother. Referring to

- Kimmy: Ons sal mos, ons het die photos Vrydag gevat, ons se Ma's pay mos Vrydag dan vat ons die photos.*
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photographs that she took where Kimmy and her friends were pouring alcohol into a glass and drinking from a bottle, she excitedly described how she enjoyed drinking with her friends. These photos clearly showed their faces and thus could not be included here. They hid their drinking from unconsenting adults by drinking away from home and waiting until she was sober to return home. This is illustrated below.

- Kimmy: *Ek is besig om wyn te skink en sy staan met die wyn in haar hand.*
- Roshan: *So waar's dit geneem, Kimmy?*
- Kimmy: *Games shop.*
- Roshan: *In die games shop, watter games shop is dit?*
- Kimmy: *Daar by ons.*
- Roshan: *O, ok.*
- Kimmy: *Daar om die draai.*
- Roshan: *Ok, so koop julle altyd wyn daar by daai games shop?*
- Kimmy: *Nee hulle verkoop nie wyn nie.*
- Roshan: *O.*
- Kimmy: *Ons gaan koop die wyn en dan drink ons daarso.*
- Roshan: *O ok, en waar kry julle die glase vir die wyn?*
- Kimmy: *By die vrou.*
- Kimmy: *Die's die braai, en hulle sit die wyn hier as hulle drink, dan gooi hulle dit in 'n beker dan gooi hulle dit uit.*
- Roshan: *O ok so waar is die, wie se yard is dit nou?*
- Kimmy: *Ons koop vir ons die goed om te braai.*
- Roshan: *En laat Uncle Pung net vir julle daar speel of moet julle betaal om daar in sy yard te sit en te speel?*
- Kimmy: *Nee.*
- Roshan: *Maar julle kom daar en julle koop nie sy bier nie julle kom met julle eie bier, julle kom drink net daar.*
- Kimmy: *Hy verkoop nie bier nie ons drink net daar.*
- Roshan: *So wat kry jy van hom af?*
- Kimmy: *Hulle drink saam, die's sy tjom mies, Pung se tjom mies.*
- Kimmy: *Ek is besig om wyn te skink en sy staan met die wyn in haar hand.*
- (Roshan: *So where is this taken Kimmy?*
- Kimmy: *Games shop.*
- Roshan: *In the games shop, which games shop is this?*
- Kimmy: *There by us.*
- Roshan: *Oh ok.*

- Kimmy: There around the corner.  
Roshan: Ok, so do you always buy alcohol at that games shop?  
Kimmy: No they don't sell alcohol.  
Roshan: Oh.  
Kimmy: We go and buy the alcohol and then drink there (referring to games shop).  
Roshan: Oh ok, and where do you get the glasses for the alcohol?  
Kimmy: By the lady.  
Kimmy: This is the braai, and they put the alcohol here when they drink, then they pour it into a jug and then they pour it out.  
Roshan: Oh ok so where is this, whose yard is this now?  
Kimmy: We just buy the stuff to braai.  
Roshan: And then does Uncle Pung just let you play there or must you pay to sit and play in his yard?  
Kimmy: No.  
Roshan: But you all just come there and you don't buy his beer, you come with your own beer, you just drink there.  
Kimmy: He does not sell beer, we just drink there.  
Roshan: So what do you get from him?  
Kimmy: They drink with us, it's him and his friends, Uncle Pung's friends.)

She knew that she could access support from some community members for occupational choices that were illegal or placed her health at risk. Further to this, the space to engage in the occupation afforded to her at the games shop was extended by knowing that she could go and sober up at Auntie Jackie's house before going home.

- Roshan: O ok, dan word jy dronk somtyds, en dan?*  
*Kimmy: Moet maar net vir my regop hou.*  
*Roshan: En dan?*  
*Kimmy: Dan gaan ek na my huis.*  
*Roshan: Gaan jy na jou huis toe? Dan wat sê jou Ma?*  
*Kimmy: Of ek slaap eerste daar by Auntie Jackie se huis.*  
*Roshan: Wie's Auntie Jackie?*  
*Kimmy: Ander vrou.*  
*Roshan: O ok, maar dan weet Auntie Jackie jy's dronk? Dan sê sy is orraait as jy daarnatoe kom?*  
*Kimmy: Ja.*  
*Roshan: Sal Auntie Jackie nie vir jou Ma sê nie?*  
*Kimmy: Huh uh.*  
(Roshan: Oh ok, the you get drunk sometimes and then?  
Kimmy: Must just keep myself together upright?)

- Roshan: And then?  
 Kimmy: Then I go home.  
 Roshan: Then you go home? What does your mother say?  
 Kimmy: Or I first sleep at Auntie Jackie's house.  
 Roshan: Who is Auntie Jackie?  
 Kimmy: Another woman.  
 Roshan: Oh ok, but then Auntie Jackie knows that you are drunk? Then she says that it is okay that you go to her?  
 Kimmy: Yes.  
 Roshan: Will Auntie Jackie not tell you mother?  
 Kimmy: No.)

It appeared that this adult, Auntie Jackie colluded with Kimmy and her friends, making their occupational choices possible. This was inadvertently supported by the freedom that she was given to stay out as late as she wanted to on a Friday night. In this way, the provisions made by adults in the community influenced Kimmy's occupational choices. Adults, like Auntie Jackie, may have intended to protect Kimmy while she was drunk, however, through this she encouraged her to make compromising occupational choices. It meant that, from a young age, this participant participated in a pattern of drinking at the start of her weekend. This was associated with her mother's receipt of weekly wages. Furthermore, the pattern of spending income from weekly wages or social security grants on alcohol was frequently observed amongst adults in Lavender Hill. This showed that similarities existed between the participant's occupational choices and the occupations that she observed other community members to engage in. This awareness informed her mindset influencing her occupational choices. Nevertheless, Kimmy's peers did not always approve of her drinking.

Kimmy stated that her current boyfriend disapproved of her drinking without him. She mischievously described hiding that she had been drunk from him. When asked what would have happened if he knew, she indicated that he would hit her. She rationalised this as:

- Kimmy: Nie seer nie.*  
*Roshan: En hoe's dit vir jou as hy so maak?*  
*Kimmy: Ek gaan huis toe as hy my slaan...*  
*Roshan: En wat sê jy vir hom wanneer hy vir jou slaan?*  
*Kimmy: Ek vergeet, as jy mos dronk is dan vergeet jy mos.*  
*Roshan: Maar jy onthou dit nou, hoe's dit vir jou om nou dit te onthou?*

*Kimmy:*     *Hy't vir my gesê.*

(*Kimmy:*     Not sore.

*Roshan:*    And how is it for you when he does this?

*Kimmy:*     I go home when he hits me...

*Roshan:*    And what do you say to him when he hits you?

*Kimmy:*     I forget, when I am drunk, then you forget right.

*Roshan:*    But you remember it now, how is it for you to remember it now?

*Kimmy:*     He did tell me.)

Kimmy felt that since he had told her not to drink she had to accept the beating. This was surprising since Kimmy was self-protective, yet she tolerated this domestic violence in the form of physical abuse. Nonetheless, she perceived this as his way of showing that he cared. Adults who disapproved of participants' occupational choices also used the peer group as a point of leverage to change the participant's choices. Significant adults would, at times adopt a linear approach of forcing participants to change their peer groups. This emerged when they disapproved of the peers' occupations. The imposed changes in peer groups were short-lived when the changes occurred against the participant's will. The support and understanding between friends during these trying circumstances contributed to the bond between peers. This was shown in the way that they experienced the consequences of their occupational choices, as when Godwin's mother hit him because he had smoked *dagga* (cannabis) with his friends. His eye was swollen, blue and he could hardly see. His friends reported it to me upon my arrival at the school. Their reporting showed their concern for him. It provided a clear picture of the way that peers rallied together in support of each other. Participants shared the burden of adults' resistance to the privacy of their occupational choices and engagement. This manifested in the significant adults' accounts of speaking to, or even scolding the participant's peer groups for the individual's actions. Richard did not have this in a consistent peer group. He appeared to be isolated and his mother expressed deep concern about how he would progress in life. Her assumption was that his relationship with his peers was a partial indication of his future prosperity.

Monash emphasised that her granny's attempts to discipline and persuade her to make particular occupational choices was received as a nuisance. She related this in a blasé manner indicating that she gave this advice little attention. Monash described her perspective on why her friends were afraid of her granny.

*Roshan:*    *Why are they scared of your Granny?*

*Monash: I don't know because she stress a lot.*

*Roshan: How does your Granny stress?*

*Monash: Like they skel (scold) then they talk about a thing over and over and over again.*

*Roshan: And what does your Granny skel (scold) you about, Monash?*

*Monash: Sometimes, you mustn't come late in the house and don't go smoke again, so.*

This was contrasted with the attention given to peers, especially the practical sense shared by participants of the way that the peer group worked. Participants knew about the everyday occurrences within their respective communities through observation and hearsay. For example, participants and their peers knew the rumours about who, in their immediate vicinity may have been convicted of murder or was in jail. Moreover, all the participants personally knew someone whose life had been threatened or who was in jail as a result of violence. Where the person accused was the one personally known to the participant, they claimed the convicted as innocent. Given the injustice of his arrest, Sindiswa spoke with concern and conviction about the well-being of her uncle who was in jail.

*Sindiswa: Want ons roep hom Oupa.*

*Roshan: Julle noem hom Oupa.*

*Sindiswa: En toe wys die ander een die gun en toe skiet die polisie nou vir my ander uncle raak en nou dood en toe sê die polisie hulle het vir hom geskiet met daai ander gun en toe gaan hulle nou tronk toe...*

*Roshan: O.*

*Sindiswa: En die ene wat die gun gehad het het weggehardloop en toe vang die polisie vir hulle nou en toe sê nou die polisie dat hulle't 'n bullet uitgehaal daar by die mortuary, hulle't die bullet uitgehaal, die polisie se bullet en daai gun se bullet is die verskil. En toe wag hulle nog altyd vir die bullet en toe moet die mense sien watter soorte bullet is dit, is dit die polisie se bullet is dan kan hulle uitkom. Nou sê maar is hulle bullet, is daai gun se bullet en dan kan hulle nie uitkom nie want dan gaan die polisie sê is hulle wat nou my ander uncle doodgeskiet het.*

*(Sindiswa: We call him granddad.*

*Roshan: You call him granddad.*

*Sindiswa: And so the other one showed the gun and the police fired, now they shot my other uncle and then he was dead and then the police said that they shot him with a different gun and then my uncle went to jail ....*

*Roshan: Oh.*

Sindiswa: And the one who had the gun ran away and then the police caught them and then the police said that they took the bullet out at the mortuary and they said that the bullet and that gun's bullet was different. And then they still waited for the bullet and the people had to say what kind of bullet it was and then said that if it was the police's bullet and then they could come out (of jail). But if the bullet was that gun's bullet then they could not come out and then they said that it was them who shot my other uncle.)

Based on her family member's narrations, Sindiswa was concerned about her uncle's unfair arrest and did not question that he was participating in illegal gang activities. Occupational choices involving risk were accepted as a normal part of living in Lavender Hill and participants did not critically position themselves in opposition to criminal activities. Similarly and also based on hearsay, Richard sadly described his brother's death.

*Richard: My een broer's dood, hulle't hom vermoor*

*Roshan: O.*

*Richard: Hy was nie eintlik 'n gangster nie maar hy't net na my suster toe gegaan, daar by die kortse, toe baklei die jongens om vir hom dood te maak. My nefie't eerste baklei, toe kan hulle nie vir hom kry nie toe haal hulle hom uit.*

*Roshan: Was jou nefie in die 'gang'?*

*Richard: Nee hy's ook nie 'n regte gangster nie maar hy't tjappies.*

(Richard: And my one brother is dead, they murdered him.

Roshan: Oh.

Richard: He was not actually a gangster; he was just visiting my sister, at the *kortse*, so the boys were fighting to kill him. My cousin fought first, and then they could not get him so they took my brother out.

Roshan: Was your cousin part of the gang?

Richard: No he's also not a gangster, but he has tattoos.)

Even though Richard's cousin had the symbolised gang tattoos and was involved in the initial fighting, Richard declared his innocence. His cousin was simply doing what many people in the community did, nothing extraordinary, nothing that would make him dangerous. Children living in proximity to each other were familiar with these accounts and so offered understanding into occupational choices that followed this sense. For example, when visiting Richard in his home in the *kortse*, he proudly showed me clay ornaments and a framed picture that his father and deceased brother had made while they were in jail. This raised questions for me about the pride associated with time in jail. I contrasted it with the shame often associated with incarceration and criminal

activity. It manifested that the gangster lifestyle was woven into the background, that is, the context shaping the possibilities of the occupational choices available in Lavender Hill. This background was implicitly shared by young adolescents living there. Following from this, participants accessed and used available opportunities through knowing how things worked in Lavender Hill. This involved knowing how they could create opportunities for themselves.

A different measure of status was also illustrated between peers. For example, Godwin and his friends tied their shoes in unique ways and competed for whose shoes were knotted in the best or most innovative formation. Photo 8 was taken during the participant observation session when this was revealed.

**Photo 8: Shoelaces as status**



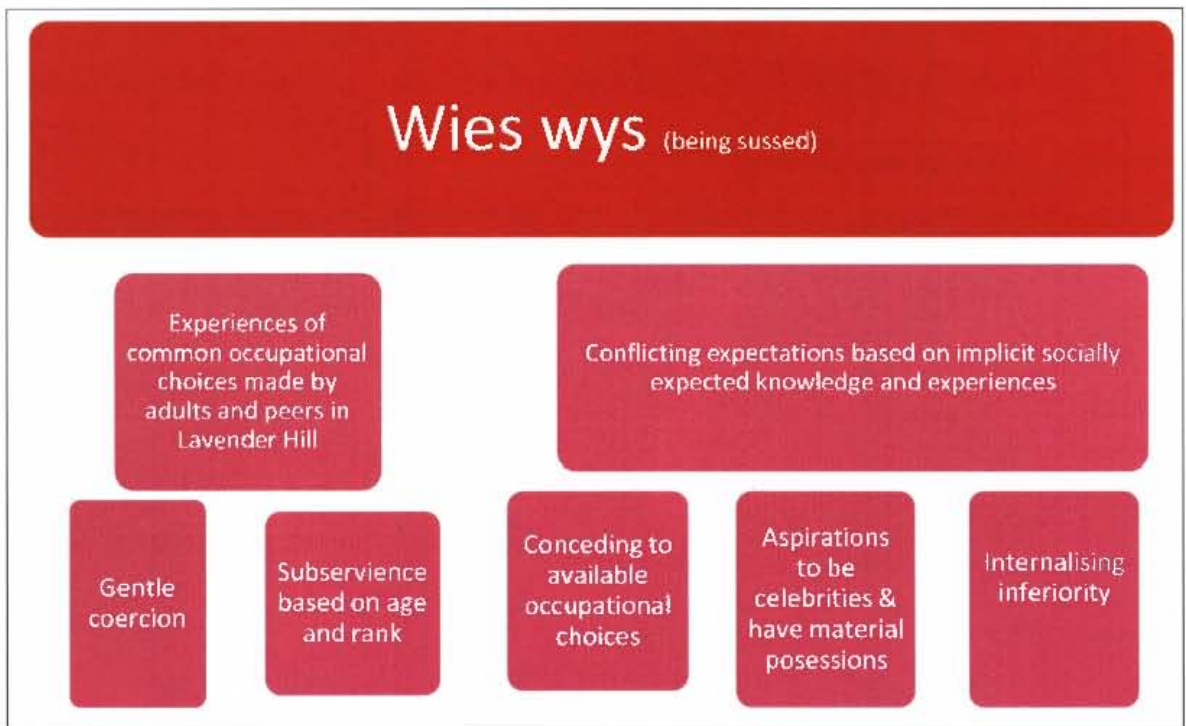
Innovative ways of gaining affirmation from peers contrasted with their aspirations to follow the many existing negative role-models. In conclusion, the category *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) showed the central role of the interaction between the participants and their peer groups in shaping the occupational choices that they engaged in. It highlighted the particular features identifying the distinctiveness of the participants' occupational choices.



#### 4.2.2 Category: *Wies wys* (Be sussed)

*Wies wys* (Be sussed) describes the way in which participants' knowledge of the occupational repertoires commonly operating in Lavender Hill influenced their occupational choices. The participants knew what was commonly engaged in and how this commonly occurred as a historically predicated pattern in Lavender Hill. Figure 11 presents the key features of this category.

**Figure 11: Features of category *Wies wys* (Be sussed)**



The participants' knowledge about how to approach their occupational choices in Lavender Hill was marked by competition between their implicitly, socially expected knowledge and their experiences in the context. It illustrated the pattern where the way that participants engaged in occupations perpetuated the historical and traditional ways of participating in occupations in this context.

The traditional ways of making occupational choices was conveyed through the features of gentle coercion, subservience based on age and rank; conceding to available occupational choices; aspirations to be celebrities and have material possessions and the participants internalising their inferiority. These features coexisted and interacted with each other to create the way of being *wys* (sussed) in Lavender Hill. The way that

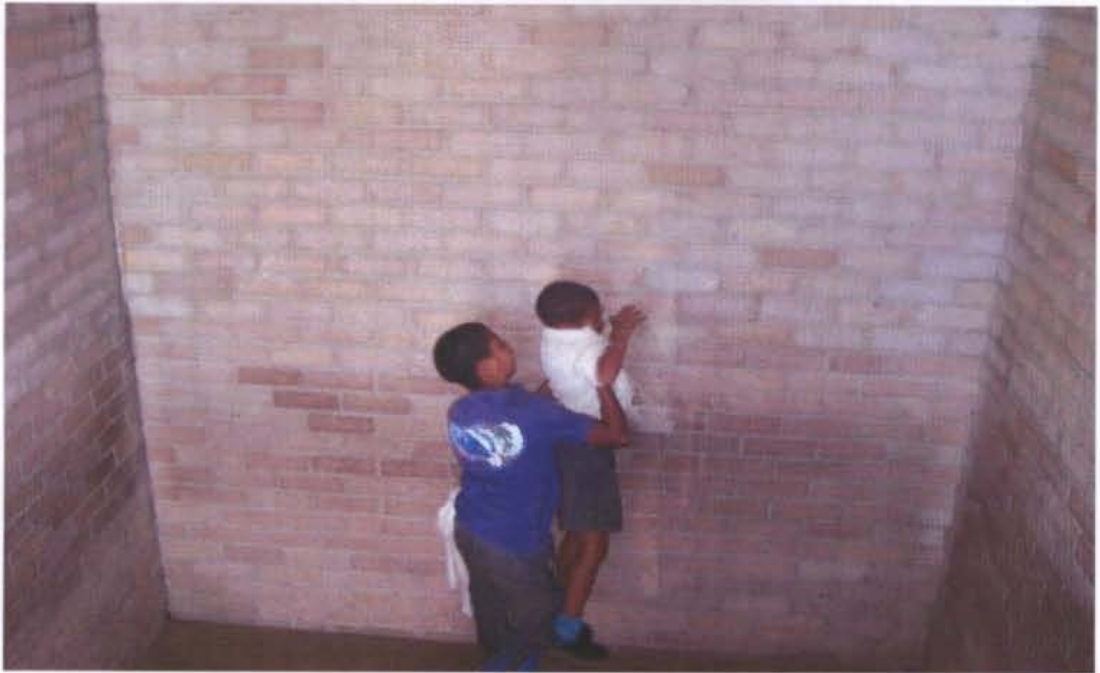


these features influenced the production of the contextually homogenised pattern captured in *Is net so* (It's just like that) is described in more detail below.

The participants' narratives indicated that they made occupational choices that were in line with existing social rules related to social hierarchies foremost to interpersonal relationships in Lavender Hill. They knew that the prevalent way of interacting was to do what you wanted to do. This knowledge was created through their occupational engagement and vicariously through others' occupational engagement. One of Marco's friends described how they used information about the roles that children were expected to fill to their benefit. He described an occasion where Marco and others wanted to buy potatoes and onions so that they could a *potjie* (three legged iron pot that food is prepared in on a fire) together. Since they did not have these vegetables and were aware that children from Lavender Hill sometimes begged at the nearby traffic lights, they decided that this would be their strategy to get some money so that they could buy the vegetables. They described standing at the traffic lights, even faking some tears, relating a tale of being hungry to the passing by motorists. They pooled the donations that they received from the motorists and proceeded to buy, cook and enjoy their vegetables. The occupation of begging gave them access to their desired occupation of eating a *potjie* together. In relation to this, they used their know-how of Lavender Hill to inform their strategy for accessing the vegetables and also having the opportunity to prepare the meal themselves. Their resourcefulness within the group was relative to their knowledge of what was possible as social agent in their context.

The above comradeship contrasted with the way that they exerted their personal power in a domineering way. The domineering way was given prominence during the participant's daily occupations. It is illustrated in Clive's description of Photo 9 below.

**Photo 9: This is how we do it**



One of Clive's friends forced a younger boy to be part of photo 7 at school. Clive described:

*Clive: Hulle wil hom oplik.*

*Roshan: En shame hy wil nie in die foto gewees het nie.*

*Clive: En toe force hulle hom, toe vat hulle die foto.*

*Roshan: En hoe dink jy, hoe is dit vir hom?*

*Clive: Hy wil nie saam die photo gevat het nie.*

*Roshan: En het jy die foto geneem?*

*Clive: Nee Andie het die foto gevat. Ja en toe ruk ons hom.*

*Roshan: O ok, is dit iets wat groot seuns kan doen, julle kan vir kleintjies ruk?*

*Clive: Nee, is nie reg nie, hulle's mos kleiner as ons.*

*(Clive: They wanted to pick him up.*

*Roshan: And shame, he didn't want to be in the photo.*

*Clive: And then they forced him and they took the photo.*

*Roshan: And what do you think, how was it for him?*

*Clive: He did not want to be with, to take the photo.*

*Roshan: And did you take the photo?*

*Clive: No, Andie took the photo. Yes, so we pulled him.*

*Roshan: Oh ok, is this something that you as big boys can do, to pull little boys?*

*Clive: No, it's not right, they are actually smaller than us.)*

This was viewed as gentle coercion (Figure 11) and not as intimidating or violent. Clive saw this as just another reproduction of the way they were with each other. He did not see this as threatening despite the unequal power relations, their age difference and the possible physical harassment. His friend performed this occupation with little concern for how the little boy may have experienced this. Clive agreed with his occupational choice and the way this part of the occupation was performed. In response to my moral insinuations he agreed that it was not correct, but despite knowing this, they still interacted in this way. The analysis of the data unveiled that this was closely aligned to an assumption shared by adults that younger persons should be respectful of older persons regardless of the circumstances.

Participants, as children, were expected to be subservient to adults. This illustrated the social hierarchy between adults and children. Godwin's mother expected him to be respectful of her and to do things for her. She resigned herself to believing that Godwin was disobedient. Her view was that a good child served their parents and did not 'backchat'. This expectation existed regardless of the observed way of interacting in Lavender Hill by people speaking up for themselves and by responding cheekily and doing what they wanted. Clive's mom held a comparable view.

*...veral as hy laat is, dan sê ek "jy ken jou tyd nê", dan wil hy nie inkom nie dan lag hy, dan sê ek "jy kan lag, ek lag nie"*

(...especially when he is late, then I say, you know your time, then he does not want to come in, then he laughs, then I say "you can laugh, but I am not laughing").

Although it surprised me that she expected him to be home as late as sunset during the week, I recognised that she was trying to act on her expectations of what was appropriate for him. Added to the required respect for adults, it was also demanded that participants be subservient to their older siblings. Richard's mom described the instructions that she gave his older brothers.

*Daarom as ek nie daar by die huis is nie en hy trek slim met hulle... Want ek het vir hulle gesê tug hom, hy moet net een ding onthou, hy moet respek wie ouer as hy ook is, jy kan nie net aangaan met jou lewe nie en jy het nie respek nie. Ek sê altyd vir hulle as jy nie respek het vir mense nie, eendag as my twee oë toe gaan dan verstoot die mense vir jou. Dan sê die mense "gaan man want jy't nooit maniere gehad nie". Ja ek praat altyd met hom dan sê hy "Mammie't dan nie maniere nie", dan sê ek "Nee, ek het maniere".*

(That's why when I am not there at home and he keeps himself clever with them...Because I told them, hit him lightly, he must just remember one thing, he must have respect for people who are older than him, you can't just carry on with your life without respect. I always tell them that if you don't have respect for people, then one day when I die, then people will ostracise you. Then people will say "go man because you never had manners". Yes I always speak to him, then he will say "but Mummy does not have manners", then I say: "No, I have manners.")

Richard's mom held the opinion that the violation of his human rights through inflicting corporal punishment was a worthwhile way of reinforcing the right to respect. In teaching him to respect his elders, he was also taught to accept his inferior position in relation to them. His challenge to her was to question whether she showed respect or had manners. I understood this questioning to be based on his experience of her as a role-model (reflected in Figure 11 as experiences of common occupational choices made by adults and peers). She responded by claiming authority without denying or explaining the behaviour that he was referring to. Interactions such as this underscored the occupational choices made. Participants sometimes had to suspend what they knew as acceptable in Lavender Hill in favour of being obedient to adults' instructions. This occurred even though they had sometimes learnt what was acceptable from interacting with adults in Lavender Hill. In this way participants were aware of the expected occupational choices contradicting those common to Lavender Hill. Monash confirmed this, citing a perceived positive example of a child's response to his teenage mother's foul language. She also shares some of her values associated with being a family.

*Monash: Like I like that stuff and that's my cousin Bruce and that's Felicia but she got a baby now.*

*Roshan: Felicia has a baby now.*

*Monash: And that's my two small cousins, they're rude.*

*Roshan: Why are they rude?*

*Monash: Like Michela and Shanaaz they're rude, they like fighting with each other then my granny skel "moenie fight nie Michela" (scolds "do not fight" Michela).*

*Roshan: Do they live in the same house?*

*Monash: Ur.*

*Roshan: And where does Felicia live with her baby?*

*Monash: She live by her auntie in Capricorn, the one that crochet.*

*Roshan: Oh yes. And how old is Felicia?*

*Monash: She is now eighteen.*

- Roshan: *Ok.*
- Monash: *She got a boy baby.*
- Roshan: *Is it, and how old is her baby?*
- Monash: *He is now one years old.*
- Roshan: *Oh.*
- Monash: *He can talk he run around and throw the balls in the house.*
- Roshan: *And what do you think of Felicia and her baby?*
- Monash: *They like, like real family.*
- Roshan: *How do you mean?*
- Monash: *Her boyfriend's name is now Nigel and her name is Felicia and the baby's name is Legel, it match and sounds nice.*
- Roshan: *And where does her boyfriend, where does Nigel live?*
- Monash: *In Lavender Hill.*
- Roshan: *Ok.*
- Monash: *There by his mommy.*
- Roshan: *Mmm so what do you mean? I hear what you say about their names but what else makes them a real family?*
- Monash: *Like they care over the child not like other people, no the child can walk bare-bum whole day, they don't give the child food, they drink and that.*
- Roshan: *She looks after her child.*
- Monash: *Ja very well and nobody can't hit him you can't even throw him then he cry.*
- Roshan: *And is Felicia at home during the day to look after him?*
- Monash: *She work in a crèche.*
- Roshan: *Ok.*
- Monash: *And she take him with. Then they say "you must sit", then he stand again. He wants his mommy must say he must stand. And if they like swear him out then he stand and watch the person the whole time before they say sorry sorry sorry.*

Monash explains that when someone gives Legel an instruction he does not respond, even if they swear at him. Instead he waits and only follows the instruction once he has received an apology for being sworn at. Monash's tone showed that she was impressed that he expected an apology. She found it acceptable that the toddler may have been sworn at, hit or had something thrown at him. For the toddler this may have meant learning that swearing and disrespect was part of the everyday repertoire of

experiences. Monash's tone showed admiration for his response even though the occurrence of the mistreatment contradicted her perception that this was a positive example of parenting. Her tone also denoted her disbelief with the toddler's bold response. Intuitively knowing the dynamics associated with interpersonal relationships in Lavender Hill and the repertoires of occupations that were engaged in, added to perpetuating the accepted ways of doing. The intention here is to alert the reader that the presence and normative interpretations of social processes associated with occupational repertoires impacted on the participant's occupational choices. An overview of all the operational rules within Lavender Hill as a social structure is not intended. Instead it is pointed out that participants automatically acted on their experienced awareness, the practical know-how which most often choosing the occupational choices common to Lavender Hill.

The way in which the participants made occupational choices involving risks reflected their divergent sets of knowledge (depicted as conflicting expectations in figure 11). For example when speaking about smoking tobacco, participants shared their knowledge that smoking tobacco was bad for their physical health, but smoked anyway. It seemed that to smoke was an expected occupational choice for people in Lavender Hill. Richard matter of factly explained the reason why he would not smoke continuously as: "*want jy kan borskanker kry en daai geode*" (because you can get chest cancer and all that). Notwithstanding this, he had experimented with smoking tobacco and only stopped because his mother had caught him and scolded him. Ironically when asked about his mother's use of substances, he proudly indicated that: "*Nee, rook net entjies, Stuyvesant*" (No, only smokes cigarettes, Stuyvesant). This showed his familiarity with the brand that she smoked and that she only smoked tobacco cigarettes and not other substances. The reference to *net* (only) alludes to his view that smoking tobacco was not problematic. This view dominated over the view of the risk to his mother's health. This was confirmed when I accompanied Richard to the shop on an errand for his brother. He revealed that he occasionally took a puff on his mother's cigarette and that he saw this as insignificant. This highlighted that he made this occupational choice despite knowing the health risk and what was expected of him.

When Kimmy spoke about spending time with her friends, she referred to smoking tobacco as invisible and taken for granted. She denoted that: "*ons rook net hier, ons doen niks*" (we just smoking here, we doing nothing). Smoking tobacco was viewed

as normative. It was supported in the community where it was common for adolescents and adults to smoke tobacco in public. This was part of the background informing the occupational choices available to participants. It was reinforced by the way that tobacco was made freely and easily accessible. Tobacco was sold to children at the local shops, home shops or street vendors. They were sold singly despite this being unlawful. It was known by all that children had opportunities to experiment with smoking tobacco from as young an age as ten and that by the time that they were thirteen they could be smokers. It was then regarded as a blessing that they were just smoking tobacco. The custom was that everyone smoked tobacco, but dagga, glue for sniffing and tik was also readily available. When asked who could buy these substances from the drug merchants, Monash responded:

*Monash: They don't mind so long they get the money.*

*Roshan: Yes, what do you think of that?*

*Monash: Is not normal, you can't sell it to any person, you have to be like 20 or 18 there, but not here, like 15, 13, 16 there.*

Monash's reference to the situation as unusual accentuates the perspective that particular occupational choices were accepted even though it was known to be extraordinary elsewhere. In this community it was ordinary. Not surprisingly then, the consequences associated with being caught were minimal. Richard explained how he was caught smoking dagga in the shed in the yard at his home.

*Richard: ...toe het ek dagga gerook en daai keer en toe het ek mos weer entjies gerook toe begin ek op die dagga te gaan en toe vang my pa vir my daai keer, daar in die hokkie.*

(Richard: ...so I smoked dagga and that time I also smoked cannabis again and then I smoked cigarettes again, then began going on dagga and then my Father caught me, that time in the shed.)

He was scolded for smoking *dagga* (cannabis) and threatened with more severe punishment if this occurred again. Despite this, Richard continued to smoke *dagga* (cannabis), then stopped and only smoked cigarettes and then smoked dagga again. The normative nature of abusing substances was reflected in the casual manner that participants shared their accounts of using substances. The impact of these different substances was also seen on people in the community. Smoking tobacco was seen as less harmful than dagga, glue or tik. The social regulation that was implied was that there was a progression in substance use. Participants thought about themselves in

relation to what they saw people using, not what people said could or should be done. This was a potent example of the power of group and community occupational engagement on occupational choice. Participants referred to the hierarchy and progression of abuse as: smoking cigarettes, then smoking dagga or sniffing glue and then smoking dagga with mandrax and lastly smoking tik or taking heroin. They regarded themselves as clean if they only smoked cigarettes and occasionally dagga. Drinking alcohol was viewed as a similar convention to smoking tobacco.

Alcohol, like (tobacco) cigarettes was part of the everyday traditions of many adults in Lavender Hill. Some participants disapproved of the daily use of alcohol. Clive expressed his disappointment in his mother:

Clive: *Daar gaan nie dinge reg aan nie...my Ma sy drink nou 'n dop, my Ma, nou so is dit.*

(Clive: The things that are going on are not right ...my mother takes a tot that is how it is.)

He recognised the reality that alcohol abuse was part of his daily experience. The negative impact of alcohol misuse on daily life was also felt by Godwin who described how he looked after his younger sister when his mother was drunk. Furthermore, he conveyed his familiarity with illegal shebeens since he had on many previous occasions been sent to the *smokkeljaart* (illegal shebeen) to buy beer for his mom. Carrying the alcohol home to his mom gave him the opportunity to taste it. That alcohol use was seen as normative, meant that the people in the neighbourhood who saw him carrying the alcohol did not question it. Furthermore, he indulged in tasting, despite experiencing the negative consequences of a mother who misused alcohol. Godwin described an incident during a visit to Uncle Dirkie's game shop when he was seven years old.

Godwin: *My Ma-hulle het daar gesit en gedrink, toe speel ek net games. Toe speel ek eerste lekker toe sien ek hier begin die mense te baklei, toe steek die man vir die vrou hier by die kant, regdeur, amper dood...*

Roshan: *Sjoe.*

Godwin: *Klomp bloed ook uitgetap. Toe hardloop my Ma uit met my uit.*

(Godwin: My mother sat there drinking (alcohol) and I was just playing games. So I was first enjoying playing and then I saw people starting to fight, so the man stabbed the woman here on the side, almost right through, almost dead...

Roshan: *Wow.*

Godwin: *A whole lot of blood gushed out. So my mother ran out with me.)*



Godwin saw how the people that his mother associated with were arguing and then physically fighting. He expressed that he did not agree with his mother visiting this game shop and using alcohol. He did not approve of what was role-modelled. When participants cited examples of adults behaving like this, they questioned why they should listen to adults who misbehaved in this way. These questions were not often posed as explicit challenges, possibly because of their respect for and fear of adults. Adding to the normalisation of alcohol use was that the smokkeljaart and games shop he frequented were on the same property. The implication of this was that while he played at the games shop, adults may have been abusing alcohol close by. Consequently he was exposed to the adults' occupations of drinking alcohol while he was playing. The irony of the participants' occupational choices lay in the tension between the occupational choices that they made and what they professed as the right thing to choose. The freedom afforded to participants maintained this. Participants were allowed to roam around in the community, visiting their friends or playing without adult supervision for the majority of their time. Subsequently, when left without supervision within the school environment, participants resorted to their usual way of interacting. This earned them disrepute at school.

Participants were frequently judged for their poor manners and told that they were failing expectations for acceptable behaviour. A common occurrence was for participants in their role as learners at school to be scolded for their misbehaviour. Kimmy captured this in photo 8 below:

**Photo 10: In trouble for what is enjoyed**



She referred to her peers' occupational choices in this instance as *Hulle gaan aan* (They are misbehaving). At the denotative level this was referred to as negative. However their tone and vocal inflection paradoxically showed admiration and reverence at the connotative level. Kimmy expressed how she enjoyed the cheerful camaraderie when the learners were 'misbehaving'. The interaction was partially enjoyed because the drumming on the desks, the dancing and singing reminded her of the way that the minstrels danced in the local carnival, *die klopse*. This was symbolically associated with deep cultural and historical significance. It was significantly different to what was acceptable at school. The educator communicated that the carnival dancing was inappropriate for the classroom. This inadvertently gave the message that the participant had an affinity for a cultural expression that had little place or value in their learning environment. As a result participants came to learn that their enjoyment was a form of misbehaviour and so termed it as *Hulle gaan aan* (They are misbehaving). Clive also referred to this, saying that he enjoyed being *wild* (wild). Consequently the participants and their fellow learners received the message daily that they were not good enough. This message was perpetuated by the differences between the socially acceptable actions and the behaviour that was learnt in the context. The opportunity to explore where this kind of behaviour could find a place in the schools' co-curricular activities was not taken up by the educator. This meant that the opportunity to apply

the aspired behaviour within occupational engagement did not exist. The further negative association with *Hulle gaan aan* (They are misbehaving) was that it affirmed their perceived poor social standing. In spite of this, participants aspired to raise their social standing.

They made occupational choices reflecting their personal and shared aspirations for elevated status. One of the ways of elevating their status related to the home they lived in. This was captured during participant observation with Marco. He lived in a cul-de-sac that appeared like an enclosed smallholding. When visiting his home, I entered into a dirt road and then manoeuvred through little lanes to get there. His two-bedroom, unplastered brick house was surrounded by two similar houses while the rest were corrugated shacks. This explained Marco's pride over his newly built house. His mother, Roni, was a single parent. She unreservedly spoke about her life situation and how this impacted on Marco. Marco gave detailed accounts of how he contributed to building the house. His future occupational choices included his plans for completing the ceiling insulations. This showed the deep consideration given to his involvement in building his home. Similarly, all of the participants associated an esteemed status with material possessions and celebrities.

Monash described how she enjoyed watching the taxis being resprayed. She excitedly described what made a taxi *look kwaai* (look smart). Her tone indicated that she viewed the driver or people using the taxi as having an elevated status because of their association with the smart taxi (aspirations in Figure 11). Monash took the follow captured photo 11 and then described her occupations associated with the taxi.

**Photo 11: Looking *kwaai* in taxi**



Monash: So I told him ja stop wait here I must first take a photo and so my cousin took the photo, I was in the back.

Roshan: So it was you sitting in the back, and where were you going with the taxi?

Monique: We went to Retreat ( a similar, neighbouring area to Lavender Hill).

Roshan: Ok, you and your cousin, and how old is your cousin?

Monash: She's now fourteen.

Roshan: Oh, so what were you going to do in Retreat?

Monique: Go buy stuff like rings and that stuff, we always go buy like silver rings and that I like silver not gold.

Roshan: Ok, and what's it like to be in the taxi?

Monash: It's like fun.

Roshan: What do you do in the taxi?

Monash: Like we talk in the taxi, listen music and that stuff.

Roshan: And how do you know Mylie so well?

*Monash: I know him, he first went out with my cousin she's now 21, he first went so he started to like know me and now he spoil me and that stuff take me to Spur, he buy me chocolate and that stuff.*

Monash also described knowing when Mylie would be respraying the taxi. She eagerly described her excitement with being able to watch this happening.

Symbolically she attributed status to the taxi owners and drivers as being powerful because of their access to this resource and the possibility of receiving treats from them. She sought to be driven in the taxis that looked *kwaai* (smart). Furthermore participants showed awareness of and aspired to be like the celebrities and pop idols (Figure 11) that they saw in the media. Participants eagerly referred to American pop stars such as Beyonce and Snoop Dogg. They invested their energy into learning the songs or dances and used this to elevate their status amongst their peers. Being able to dance with the latest moves and know the words of the popular songs meant that you were cool. The girls in particular knew the latest songs and would sing to these or discuss the choreography or clothing worn in the music videos. The girls seemed to be more interested in the lyrics and the boys in the culture associated with the music, particularly with the rap culture. Consequently, they spent more time on and focused more on learning or mimicking the rap culture, dance moves or lyrics of popular songs than doing their schoolwork. The participants also used the little money that they had to pay to listen to music at the games shops. A similar trend applied with television. Participants were familiar with all the characters in the soaps. Richard described the reason why he enjoyed *Sewende Laan*:

*Richard: Is interessant, die mense skel, daai goed, Paula-hulle.*

(Richard: It's interesting, the people scold and all that. Paula 'n them)

He referred to the character Paula with familiarity. His attraction to the arguments resonated with the way that people in his own community argued with one another. He attributed worth to the arguing and this could have confirmed the value of interacting in this way for him. Likewise countless children in Lavender Hill had the names of television or movie actors or actresses. While soap operas are popular amongst many people, for participants in this study, its peculiarity was that it seemed that sharing names or any characteristics with famous people gave them access to identify with the

television personalities. This may have been an illusory strategy contrasting with the limited socio-economic status that they experienced in reality.

The people in the community who had the economic status of those on television were gangsters and drug merchants. They were believed to have higher status. This was so even if they may have owned little material wealth. Clive described the opportunity to use a playstation or eat all you wanted at a friend's grandfather's house who was a drug merchant. Gangsters had power in the community and symbolically were seen as role-models in terms of having achieved material wealth. Those who did not have access to material wealth had access to power in the form of respect earned through gang membership. So although their social aspirations were towards those television presenters or actors, the people resembling these successful images in their community were the gang members. These people were able to display their wealth with shiny jewellery or *bling*<sup>4</sup>, or had power through the threat of violence.

Of note here is that the participants held two broad categories of role-models. There were those whom they saw and interacted with in their local context and those whom they saw in the media. They aspired to be like the famous role-models whom they saw in the media. However, the people with whom they had contact were the locally available role-models. These were young (often teenage) mothers, school drop-outs or hardworking matriculants who have good office jobs, or are unemployed. Many of these locally available role-models were not socially upwardly mobile. Showing off expensive clothing, jewellery or accessories became an illusory strategy. The participants often sported imitation or handed down versions of the genuine designer fashion items. Parents spoke about spending their money on fashion items even though they could often not afford it. Participants attempted to show their fluency with materials and technology such as cellphones. For instance, Monash showed her knowledge of technology when she saw my cell phone.

*Nokia, everybody likes Nokia. I'm going to get a phone in this year.*

She portrayed experience with it, expressing with certainty that she was going to own a phone of a particular brand. With further discussion, she revealed that she had never even held a Nokia phone. Also, from her granny's account, the reality that she did not have direct access to any cellphones emerged. However, through media, seeing people

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4. "Bling-bling (or simply bling) is a slang term in hip hop culture referring to flashy or elaborate jewelry and ornamented accessories that are carried, worn, or installed" (Wikipedia, 2010a).



with phones, and indirect contact, she communicated her acquaintance with a brand of cellphones. A different mechanism for communicating and achieving material status was described by Richard who owned a mixed breed of pitbull terriers. He proudly described his fame for owning the fierce dogs. When I visited, I had to wait while he checked that the dogs were safely tied because they could attack. He entered them into dog fights in the community. Their way of engaging in occupations shaped the occupational choices that they made. Continuing to make these particular occupational choices created patterns of occupational choices which were recognised by significant adults. This conflicted with the aspirations that adults had for them. In the following example, Godwin's mother lamented his behaviour:

*...en dan is Godwin vreeslik ongehoorsaam, hy gee vir my tale, as ek hom sê miskien, maak vir mammi 'n koppie tee, of sit die TV oor. Ek wil hom nie sleg praat nie want dit gaan vir my nêrens bring nie om vir hom sleg te praat nie, maar ek praat maar net die waarheid. Godwin is somtyds is hy, soos nou die dag wat ek nou gebrand het, wat hy uit die skool uit kom toe sien hy nou ek het gebrand. Toe doen hy nou als vir my, maar hy's alweer weg daarvandaan af. En dan praat hy soos hy wil. So ek weet nie wat word van Godwin nie...*

(...and then Godwin is extremely disobedient, he backchats, if I perhaps ask him to make me a cup of tea or to change the channel on the TV. I don't want to bad-mouth him because that will not take me anywhere to bad-mouth him, but I am just speaking the truth. Godwin is sometimes is, like, like the other day when I burnt myself. When he came from school and saw that I was burnt. Then he did everything for me, but he is not doing that anymore. And he speaks how he wants. So I do not know what is happening to Godwin...)

Godwin's mom expressed concern that he was following in the same path as his older brother Bradley who had dropped out of school.

*Maar waarop ek nou teneerkom eintlik is dat, dat ek wil nie hê Godwin moet dieselfde pad loop as wat sy broer geloop het nie, en môre vir my blameer daaroor nie, verstaan u. Ons het nie kommunikasie met mekaar nie. Want as ek hulle vra wat is die probleem, as hulle nie kwaad verby jou loop nie, dan gee hulle jou nie antwoord nie, of hulle mol om uit te kom, u sien. So môre gaan die een gaan soontoe en die ander een gaan soontoe want ons vind nie mekaar nie. Nou daai is ook 'n problem, nie net van hom af nie van sy oudste broer. Ek het eendag vir hom (Bradley) by die social worker gehad toe sê ek vir hom nou ok as jy nie voor my wil praat nie dan gaan ek uit dan praat jy saam met die social worker. Sê vir haar dan hoe jy voel oor die saak en lat sy vir my inroep dan kan ons mos nou praat oor die saak. Nie eers dit het gehelp nie. U sien nou ek is net bang dat dieselfde hier gaan gebeur.*

(But what I actually am getting to is that, that I do not actually want Godwin to follow the same path as the path that his brother followed, and tomorrow to blame me, do you understand? We don't have a way of communicating with each other. Because when I ask them what is the problem, if they don't walk past you looking angry, then you get no answer, or they rush to get out of here, you see. So tomorrow the one goes this way and the other that way, because we don't get each other. Now that is also a problem, not just his problem, but also his older brother. One day I had him (referring to Bradley, Godwin's older brother) at the social worker, so I told him, now ok, if you don't want to speak in front of me, then I'll go out and you speak to the social worker. Tell her how you feel over the matter and then let her call me in and then we can speak about the matter. Not even that helped. You see, I am just afraid that the same is going to happen here.)

She did not know how to communicate with Bradley and subsequently with Godwin, in a way so that they would change. Instead she even accessed social services in a threatening way. She feared that her children would not be supportive of each other and she saw herself as a limited agent of change. Her options were limited to speaking to Godwin, encouraging him to attend school, chastising him and accessing social services. Their occupational choices were not productively problematised. Godwin's mother realised that speaking negatively about him was not helpful, yet she did just that. Similarly other participants' parents knew that there was a problem, but drew attention to the children's disobedience, misbehaviour and inferiority (Figure 11). Since the reasons for their actions were not critically engaged with or inspected by the participants or their parents, they did not consider what could be done differently other than accessing the customary options. Afraid that Godwin was following in the same patterns as Bradley, she described what had happened to Bradley before he dropped out.

*...en toe't hy nou weer skool gegaan skool gegaan skool gegaan. Toe's dit al seker drie dae, want ek het hom al missing al ook verklaar by die poliesstasie. Seker na drie dae se tyd toe kry ek vir Bradley. Weer skool toe, social worker in en als, u sal my nie wil glo nie, ek het tot op die hoërskool diesefde probleem gehad en wat hy nou standerd sewe is, en hy wil voel om maar nou seker maar nou by homself hy wil nie meer skool gaan nie, toe sê ek ek gaan ook nou nie meer.*

(And so he went to school again, school again, school again. So it was probably about three days because, I already had reported him as missing at the police station. Maybe after three days time. So I got Bradley to go to school again, back to the social worker and everything. You won't want to believe me, I had the same problem up until high school. And then when he was in standard seven and he felt now, maybe, just by himself that he does not want to go to school anymore. Then I said I can't anymore.)



Her feeling of desperation left her resigned to allowing her son to drop out of school despite wanting more for him. Her last attempt was to:

*...En toe bel die social worker, sê vir my hulle kan nie vir hom na verbeteringskool toe stuur nie want hy't nie want hy het nie 'n crime gedoen nie. Dit is wat ek nie kan kleinkry nie, because why, hoekom moet ons wat ons se kinders wil help, hoekom moet's eerste wag tot hulle iets commit om dan 'n verandering in die lewe te bring? Want ek mean, prevention is better than cure.*

(...And so I phoned the social worker, they told me that he can't go to a correctional school because he did not commit a crime. This is what I can't understand, because why must we, who want to help our children, why must we first wait until they commit a crime to bring a change in their lives? Because I mean, prevention is better than cure.)

Exhausted by her concern, Godwin's mother was not sure how to really change the pattern for him. The real options for change were time at the reformatory; in jail or being reborn (a Christian). These were perceived as strategies for change. The alternative was to find a job. Confounding this reality was that participants did not spend time at home doing schoolwork. This hardly ever entered into their discourse. The participants' parents and guardians attempted to change this by scolding their children. They did not seem to create the opportunity to encourage children by working with them at home; this was not the norm. The way things were, were conceded as the way things are and always would be. There was little incentive or chance of things being different.

With time, their lived evidence of what was possible became the superior form of knowledge shaping their occupational choices. Adults' actions perpetuated this for participants. Consider the following contradiction: Godwin's mom wanted him to follow a different occupational trajectory, yet she expressed the following unsupportive view.

*U sien, nou ek het mooi uitgevind, ek het nou twee jaar terug, toe het ek vir hom, hy wil so graag 'n bicycle gehad het, maar omdat ek dit nie kan bekostig nie, toe't ek hom 'n bietjie gebribe. As hy gaan slaag, dan gaan ek. En toe het hy altwee kwartale baie goed gedoen, maar ongelukkig toe kan ek nou nie bekostig om die bicycle te koop nie. Nou u sien, hy kan dit doen maar hy wil gepromise is hy gaan iets kry. Nou waarvoor moet ek hom altyd iets gee? Hy moet weet hy doen dit vir homself.*

(You see, now I found out nicely, I did now, two years ago, then I gave him, he so badly wanted a bicycle, but because I could not afford it, so I bribed him a little. I told him that if he passes then I will. So he did very well both terms, but unfortunately I could not afford to buy him the bicycle.

(But what I actually am getting to is that, that I do not actually want Godwin to follow the same path as the path that his brother followed, and tomorrow to blame me, do you understand? We don't have a way of communicating with each other. Because when I ask them what is the problem, if they don't walk past you looking angry, then you get no answer, or they rush to get out of here, you see. So tomorrow the one goes this way and the other that way, because we don't get each other. Now that is also a problem, not just his problem, but also his older brother. One day I had him (referring to Bradley, Godwin's older brother) at the social worker, so I told him, now ok, if you don't want to speak in front of me, then I'll go out and you speak to the social worker. Tell her how you feel over the matter and then let her call me in and then we can speak about the matter. Not even that helped. You see, I am just afraid that the same is going to happen here.)

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Now you see he can do it but he wants to be promised that he is going to get something. Now why must I always give him something? He must do it for himself.)

The expectation is that he should know that he must work for himself. He should be self-motivated in this regard. However, their knowledge generated through the lived experience of doing and learning vicariously in their homes and community, was given more weight when making occupational choices than the possibilities that were meant to be available to them. As children participants had similar internalisations to the adults in Lavender Hill. In conjunction with these internalisations, participants displayed resourcefulness.

The agency evidenced in their resourcefulness served the participants and the context in the immediate, but not in the long-term. For example, Richard was talented at gambling and described his experiences with pride:

*Richard: As jy nou dobbel, sê maar jy't nou verloor en jy wil nie jou geld gee nie. Dan steek hulle jou.*

*Roshan: O.*

*Richard: Jy moet nie junk dobbel nie, reg dobbel.*

*Roshan: So met wie dobbel jy?*

*Richard: Met groot laities, gangsters, enige een, maar hulle gooi R20, dan dobbel ons en dan wen ek.*

*Roshan: So jy was goed met die dobbelry, gister. En toe, jy't my nog vertel toe hardloop jy weg van die boere af?*

*Richard: Ek het hulle gedodge, toe hardloop ons daar, daar by daai court, op by daai stairs, toe hardloop ek so om, toe hardloop ek straight huistoe. Toe ek hier kom toe jump ek oor daai muur.*

*Roshan: Jy's gelukkig!*

*Richard: Jy moet vinnig wees vir hulle.*

(*Richard: When you gamble now, say for instance, say now that you lose and you do not want to give your money, then they stab you.*

*Roshan: Oh.*

*Richard: You must not gamble junk, you must gamble right.*

*Roshan: So with whom do you gamble?*

*Richard: With big boys, anyone, but they throw R20, then we gamble, then I win.*

*Roshan: So you were good with the gambling yesterday. And so, you were still telling me that you ran away from the police.*

*Richard: I dodged them, so we ran there, there close to the kortse, up those stairs, so I ran that way around and straight home. So when I got here, so I jumped over that wall.*

*Roshan: You're lucky!*

Richard: You must be fast for them.)

His gambling skill earned him cash in the short-term. However it also identified him as a violator of the law and so at potential risk of police arrest. The skills that he had matched the opportunities available in this context. However with different opportunities, Richard would struggle to use his skills or apply the confidence that he had. Had I not become known to Richard through the research, I would not have expected him, based on the impression that he created, to be capable of participating with such confidence and presence. This was also because I had observed that when participants had to explicitly express their views to an adult, they did so with difficulty or not at all. Participants' confidence and professed knowledge was at times a misleading representation of their occupational engagement. When the opportunities were accessible, the participants presented as under-prepared. This was probably because of the lack of opportunity to test their skills. So although most of the research participants were opinionated this did not emerge initially in the research. This difficulty was confirmed by the significant adults and encounters with the participants' educators. They held the view that many young adolescents had stubborn attitudes and that this limited their capacity to engage with others. In the face of opportunity when the "stubbornness" or their natural way of being was not required, or where their formal education needed to be called forth they then lacked confidence. Even participants who were academically average were shy and aloof when they were required to represent themselves personally. This shyness went beyond just adolescent shyness in that it limited their participation in school initiatives. I also noticed this with groups of children that I interacted with through my services in Lavender Hill. Little opportunities besides formal school education were available for participants to develop their abilities to express themselves succinctly in different contexts. Furthermore, Afrikaans was given a more dominant status over the Xhosa language. This was shown in the lack of available opportunities to learn in Xhosa at school. The languages of instruction at all primary schools in the area were limited to English and Afrikaans. This was so despite the many Xhosa first language speakers, such as Sindiswa, in Lavender Hill. It is instrumental to note that under apartheid *gamtaal* Afrikaans was associated with coloured people, Xhosa with black people and English and Afrikaans with white people. The subtle communication in the use of language

contributed to limiting the participants when communicating with adults or on matters that was not directly related to Lavender Hill.

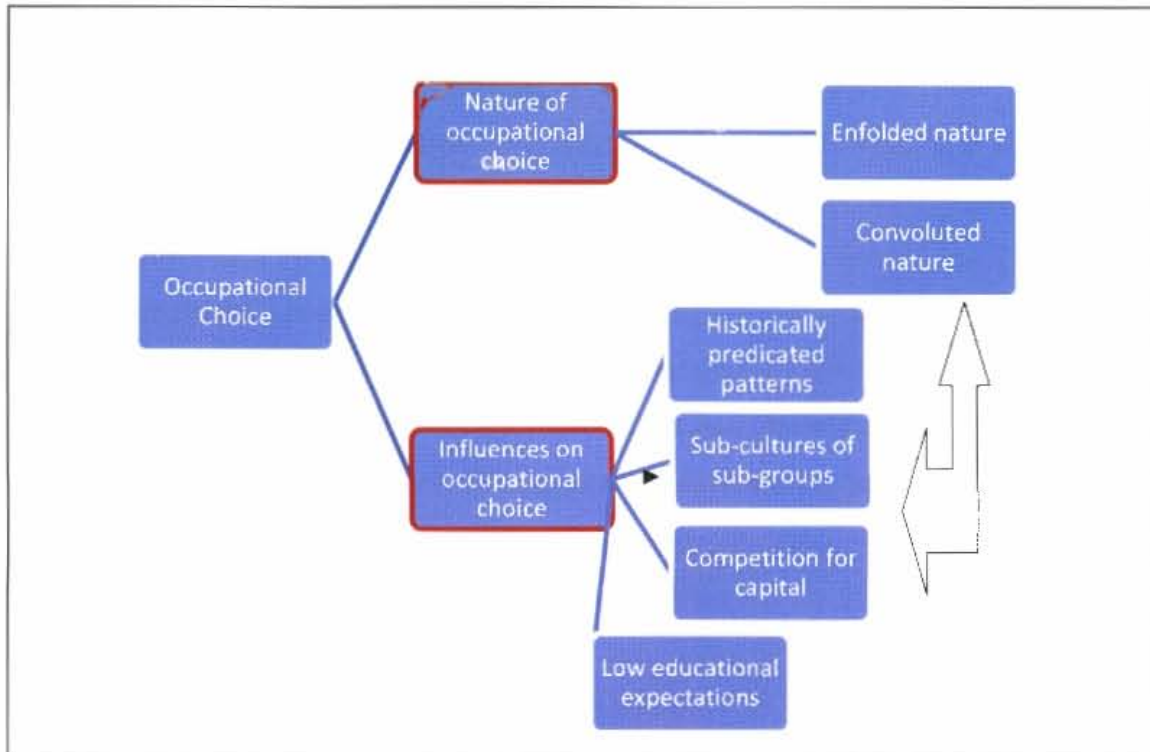
Participants sometimes expressed themselves with surprising confidence, but then did not really have the experience to support this. Immediately available services were such as social work therapeutic services; or faith-based counselling. Sports activities were informally available through opportunities to play street soccer or netball. Club membership was possible for those who showed skill or deep interest. Participants could also become involved in religious activities and the local minstrels. The opportunities to become involved in dance or choir groups were limited to those children who showed skill or had previous experience with an instrument or technique. This meant that opportunities for development were open to a select group of young adolescents and the rest had limited access to development opportunities. So opportunities may have been viewed as inaccessible because the participants felt incompetent at attempting them. For example, Godwin enjoyed playing soccer, but did not think that he was particularly skilled and could not pay for soccer boots. Thus he did not become involved in a club. Clive was known for his skill in soccer and this had been recognised by a local soccer coach. He consequently joined the club and spent time practising. So although participants were resourceful and engaging, this aimed at satisfying their immediate desires. In their thinking about participating in occupations, they planned for their short, but not intermediate and long-term future. While this may be all right for children who have access to social capital resources that can enable them to move from these circumstances, for the participants in this study, it means that they will follow in the footsteps of the adults in their community. This carries the possibility of leaving them in the cycle of poverty.

Aspirations that were apparent were to become teachers, pilots, nurses. Participants spoke of these, but with their actions, at such young ages as thirteen, their capacities to turn this into reality was a challenge. They are seen for their lack of seriousness or ability to contribute to a positive trajectory even at this very young age. The adults who had power to make changes, such as some of the educators, did not see the participants' potential. On the other hand, when they created opportunities and learners did not pursue them, it served to prove the participants' disinterest. This negative view that participants were "chancers" who were making and taking the gaps limited them from accessing opportunities.

### 4.3 Conclusion

The participants had developed an enclosed, encultured way of interacting with each other. The rules that operated were distinct, but participants had difficulty articulating this difference. The details of the encultured system were elaborated upon in the categories ***Ek en my tjommies*** (My friends and I) and ***Wies wys*** (Be sussed). Being immersed in Lavender Hill led them to accept without challenge the opportunities available to them. This resulted in an interface where the limited opportunities formed boundaries for their occupational choices. Their acceptance of the status quo extended to their acceptance of the social trajectory that was associated with being and living in Lavender Hill. The participants internalised a set of opportunities that shaped who they thought they were and this shaped the occupational choices that they made. The findings show that the young adolescents' occupational choices referred to the application of their choices to participation in occupations. Their occupational choices could be made, manifesting as a process or also presented as outcomes of their decisions relating to participation.

Figure 12: Aspects of the nature of and influences on occupational choice



The first section of this discussion examines the crucial factors within the context that influenced the young adolescents' occupational choices. Within the context, the factors influencing occupational choice included the young adolescents' experiences of the (1) historically predicated patterns of occupations at a community level in Lavender Hill, (2) prevalent subcultures and subgroups, (3) competition for symbolic status and (4) low educational expectations. The findings provided insight into the contextual and recursive construction of occupational choice for the young adolescents who participated in this study. The cultural know-how associated with and the establishment of the peer group as a social network together with the knowledge of how to act and express one's identity, ensured that the pattern of occupational choices remained fixed. This contributed to the instinctual sense associated with the undisputed nature of their occupational choices. Consequently, it will be argued that the circumstances under which occupational choices were made by the participants in Lavender Hill were such that the social and economic structures were closely connected with the actions taken by them.

In the second section the *enfolded and convoluted nature* of the young adolescents' occupational choices will be discussed. It will be suggested that the *enfolded nature* is brought about by the *occupational and temporal qualities of*

**occupational choice.** These qualities in turn are reinforced by the implicit way the young adolescents' practical consciousness guides their occupational choices. This immersion will be shown to contribute to the abstract nature of occupational choice. Further insight into how the enfolded nature of occupational choice and the above contextual factors influenced the young adolescents' occupational choices is offered by drawing mostly on Bourdieu's theory of social action (Bourdieu, 1977b, 1990; Jenkins, 1992). It is implied that the enfolded, abstract nature of occupational choice and the contextual influencing factors contributed qualitatively to the **convoluted nature** of the young adolescents' occupational choices. This will be deliberated by proposing that the **contextual relevance and coherence of patterns of occupational choice** are qualities contributing to this convoluted nature. These qualities of the convoluted nature of occupational choice influenced the status of occupational choices as described by ***Is net so*** (It's just like that). It will be explained how the significance of status should be considered with reference to the enfolded, convoluted nature of occupational choice and its implications for post-apartheid South Africa.

## **5.2 The Influence of the Context of Lavender Hill on Occupational Choice**

The occupational choices made by the research participants emerged as inextricably linked with the context. The context of Lavender Hill did more than to serve as a backdrop for occupational choice, instead it became part of occupational choice. The context contributed to creating occupational choice. Within the context, the factors influencing occupational choice included the young adolescents' experiences of the (1) historically predicated patterns of occupations at a community level in Lavender Hill; (2) subcultures of subgroups; (3) competition for forms of capital and (4) low educational expectations. These factors did not function in a binary fashion. Instead, they influenced occupational choice in a composite manner and interplayed with each other. It is thus suggested that insight into the relationship between (social) structure and (human) agency in shaping social action is helpful in shedding light on the reasons for this. This can be applied to occupational choice, since occupation is a form of social action. Context is perceived as corresponding to the social structures and processes, with young adolescents as the agents making occupational choices. Similarly, the young



adolescents' construction of occupational choice seemed contextually bound. That is, the context and occupational choice seemed inseparable. Likewise, it is asserted that social structure does not exist independently of human agency since agents interact with social structures to fulfil norms that fit their images of what reality is (Cassell, 1993). It is proposed that occupational choice may be one way whereby agents and structures define and reproduce each other.

Consequently the influences within the context have to be considered simultaneously despite being discussed sequentially here. The following section discusses the significance of each of the contextual factors in creating occupational choices to be as described in *Is net so* (It's just like that).

### 5.2.1 Influence of historically predicated occupational patterns at a community level

The findings of this study showed that the occupational choices of the young adolescents in Lavender Hill were contingent on the historically asserted patterns of engaging in occupations in the community of Lavender Hill. This was expressed in the category, *Wies wys* (Be sussed). Participants' occupational choices were continuous with the historical patterns of occupational choices in Lavender Hill. The young adolescents who participated in this study made occupational choices by considering the range of occupations available in their context. Their interpretation of the range was limited by their exposure to a narrow range of occupations. Exposure to occupations refers to the contact and experience that persons have of occupations. Exposure to a limited range of occupations directly shaped participants' daily occupational choices.

#### 5.2.1.1 *Physical structures contribute to a disposition of limited available occupations*

At a community level, the young adolescents positioned themselves as part of a coloured community. Coloured identity emerged as a racial classification during apartheid, but also represents a creolised identity that continues to evolve (Erasmus, 2001a). In keeping with the historic development of Lavender Hill under the now abolished Group Areas Act ("Group areas Act", Act No 41 of 1950), Lavender Hill was zoned as a coloured residential area where people were relocated to apartment style housing or *kortse*. The way of living on the *kortse* reflected components of coloured identity. The association of the *kortse* historically with apartheid and continually with coloured culture is outlined below.

The young adolescents associated their occupational choices with the lifestyle of people living in housing structures such as the *kortse*. They accepted these structures as a normal way of life for themselves and fellow community members in Lavender Hill. Living in the *kortse* and informal dwellings, with substandard housing and poor infrastructure left the young adolescents making occupational choices based on what they knew to be happening in the physical spaces with which they were familiar. Occupational choices were influenced on a daily basis by the sub-standard physical housing and communal recreation structures that have not changed significantly since apartheid. The young adolescents' experiences showed that they underwent the historical legacy left as a result of no planning for the expansion of the area. All of the participants experienced living in little shacks or *hokkies* for periods of their lives. This resulted in their acceptance of this standard of living as part of their day to day experiences. The complex issues associated with the context of their occupational choices was evident. The depth of the participants' involvement in the realities (such as parents abusing alcohol or sparse living conditions) shaping their homes emerged in relation to their occupational choices. While this sometimes had a direct influence on their occupational choices, it continuously formed part of their dispositions as young adolescents. For young adolescents living in Lavender Hill, the physical structures imposed by and resulting from the Group Areas Act shaped the dispositions which informed their occupational choices.

An earlier ethnographic study conducted by Salo (2004) in Manenberg, an area on the Cape flats similar to Lavender Hill, also highlighted the influence of the *kortse* way of life. She indicated that the lifestyle associated with living in the *kortse* shaped the way that personhood was experienced. Participants in this study showed an awareness of the evolved behavioural and social rules associated with living in Lavender Hill. For example, some adults colluding with young adolescents' participation in substance abuse or that gang signs could be used for protection. Their interpretation and compliance with the behavioural and social rules influenced their occupational choices. The historical way of living in Lavender Hill as created and perpetuated in part by people living there, influenced the occupational choices of participants.

### 5.2.1.2 Socio-economic class contributes to the predicated patterns

A characteristic of Lavender Hill is that of a working class community (StatsSA, 2001) historically associated with the coloured preferential labour policy. Congruently, the lived experiences of the young adolescents and the tacit knowledge that they drew on in making occupational choices were rooted in the view of themselves as being part of a coloured working class community. It influenced their occupational choices in that their acceptance of the economic limitations impacted on their interpretation of occupations and opportunities. This is consistent with Lavender Hill being zoned a coloured preferential and working class area during apartheid. Young adolescents predominantly considered themselves as participating in occupations that they saw others in their communities participating in. This was evident in their comfortable association with being part of the manual labour workforce, or positions requiring minimal or no education and training. The working class character of the occupational choices made by the young adolescents was also evident in their attraction to occupations characteristic of this group. They appeared to be marginalised as part of a lower income, working class community which perpetuated the marginalisation introduced during apartheid.

Patterns of occupations which were common in the community, such as abusing alcohol and dropping out of school appeared synonymous with this disposition for young adolescents in Lavender Hill. Consequently, the young adolescents' occupational choices continued with these patterns of engaging as they made occupational choices that reflected consistency with historical patterns as reflected in *Wies wys* (Be sussed). The participants made occupational choices that resulted in their occupations continuing along similar trajectories to previous generations. The identity constructions provided ideological continuity with the way that coloured identity was constructed during apartheid. This extended to the young adolescents' perspectives of the limited achievements that were possible for coloured youth. Young adolescents did not see the existence of opportunities to make different occupational choices, or when alternative occupational choices were identified, these were seen as inaccessible. When explicitly seeking to engage in occupations, young adolescents weighed up options and scanned the environment for opportunities to engage. It was evident that their decisions to engage in occupations depended on their expectations and prior experiences of the occupations. Adults served as role-models despite the adolescents explicitly

disapproving of some of the adults' behaviours. The contradiction in participants' occupational choices was that they sometimes made occupational choices similar to the adults in the community of whom they disapproved. Further to this, the adults who disagreed with the adolescents' occupational choices seemed unable to take positive action to change the young adolescents' occupational choices.

Sparse attention was given to academic tasks after school. **Wies wys** (Be sussed) highlighted that parents tried their *bes* (best) to preach the importance of schooling to children. The findings reflected that the value adults in Lavender Hill reportedly placed on education was not evident in the structures that they put in place to enable or support young adolescents' academic achievement. Instead, adults preached the importance of schooling and commonly condoned corporal punishment as a strategy for enforcing their message. This seemed to have a limited impact on the occupational choices that youth made. In keeping with the expectation placed upon them, young adolescents in this study attended school, but their academic efforts were minimal.

The occupational choices that they made emerged from their local lived experience and this gave form to their occupational patterns. Participants progressively aligned their view of possibilities with what they saw happening for others in the community. They then aligned themselves in their actions with this even though they may still have had the hope of achieving more. Consequently adolescents' occupational choices were shaped so that they continued along particular trajectories, framing the way that participants perceived and approached opportunities. The importance of the way that social structures shape and are shaped by everyday living is recognised in sociology and occupational therapy. Social structures play a part in producing agency in social life and this agency contributes to creating the structures (Cuff, Sharrock, & Francis, 2006). Applying this insight to occupational choice, emphasises the relational, transactional nature of occupational choice. Occupational choice may be seen as a mechanism contributing to agency and through this creating the social structures. That is, through making occupational choices, young adolescents exercise their agency and contribute to social structures. The discourse associated with occupational choice is an important ideological and operational aspect of the production of occupational choice and is elaborated upon below.

### 5.2.1.3 Discourse and linguistic expression perpetuates the predicated patterns

The occupational choices that young adolescents made were communicated using the language of *gamtaal*. *Gamtaal* is a Cape Flats dialect of Afrikaans which has been associated with notions of reflecting working class coloured identity (Haupt, 2001). The young adolescents persistently used *gamtaal* to identify, describe and explain their occupational choices. It was even used in the nicknames used, for example when Richard was called *Pitte*. Common phrases such as being *wys* or *sussed* expressed a way of knowing how things are done in a coloured community. Historically *gamtaal* was accepted by coloured communities and others as socially inferior (Adhikari, 2005) and this subversively persists despite South Africa's policy of multi-lingualism. It is suggested that this is of concern since the English language has become part of a wider institutional and societal discourse where it holds powerful status and influences possible social mobility (Kapp, 2006). The perspective of the inferiority of their occupational choices was elicited from young adolescents and significant adults in Lavender Hill, and was reflective of their working class disposition. The reality for some Xhosa-speaking young adolescents was that they did not have the choice to learn in their mother tongue in Lavender Hill. It appeared that they had to assimilate to predominantly using *gamtaal*. This manifested the impact of Lavender Hill as a coloured racial preferential area assigned by the Group Areas Act during apartheid. This highlighted the salience of politics in shaping the contribution of language used to communicate and arguably also, to construct occupational choices.

The language with which young adolescents constructed their occupational choices contributed to the perpetuation of the hegemony emerging from *Is net so* (It's just like that). Consequently, when occupational choices were made, they were embedded in the dispositions which were created as historical products of previous patterns. This implies that the historical patterns of occupational choices are ever present in the construction of occupational choices. This is supported by the view that coloured identity is distinctively shaped and reshaped in the contexts of slavery, colonialism and cultural dispossession that leaves their constructed and composite historical nature always evident and dislocation always present (Erasmus, 2001b). Occupational choices for young adolescents in Lavender Hill perpetuated the hegemony of being part of a coloured working class community. This was evident in the participants' discourse when describing their occupational choices. It revealed the ever

presence of historical factors in shaping occupational patterns and this influencing young adolescents' occupational choices.

Occupational choices were shaped by the young adolescents' dispositions as these interfaced with their socio-economic circumstances. The way that the young adolescents made occupational choices operated within their limited socio-economic boundaries. This meant that a mindset where opportunities were limited to those available in Lavender Hill was characteristic of young adolescents' occupational choices. This invisible, normative standardisation of expectation for occupational engagement is a feature of occupational marginalisation (Townsend & Wilcock, 2004b).

### **5.2.2 Occupational choice is influenced by subcultures of subgroups in Lavender Hill**

Engaging critically with young adolescents in Lavender Hill revealed that their occupational choices reflected the subcultures of subgroups existing in Lavender Hill. Examples of these included gangsters and peer groups. Young adolescents who participated in this study showed an awareness of the kinds of occupational choices that members of subgroups made. This awareness was applied when they scanned the environment to inform their occupational choices. Consequently, they made occupational choices that were consistent with these subgroups.

The young adolescents' discussions of their occupational choices reflected their knowledge of subcultures and subgroups such as gangsters in Lavender Hill. This was apparent in their awareness of the activities, language and symbolic expressions of various subgroups. The awareness of gang-related activities was part of the participants' mainstream knowledge. Although, to my knowledge, none of the participants was directly involved with gang-related activities, these formed part of the repertoire of occupations that were easily accessible to them. Gangsters held a revered social position as the *ouens* (men) with status within Lavender Hill. Young adolescents tended to conform to the cultural laws about how to behave respectfully in relation to gangsters. One implication of this was that participants' perspectives on citizenship were influenced by the pervasive gang subculture. Participants were familiar with gangster lifestyles and criminality and this formed part of the know-how of making occupational choices. It was also an easily accessible lifestyle with occupational choices that were familiar to all. Role-modelling abusive or aggressive behaviour in the family

and community made gang life seem more appealing for adolescents in Cape Town (Ward, Martin, & Distiller, 2007). Incessant exposure to risk-taking occupations has been shown to influence young adolescents in Lavender Hill to engage in risk-taking behaviour (Carrier, Dutton, & Lee, 2002). It has also been suggested that the negative outcomes of such behaviours are associated with various degrees of depression, anxiety and conduct disorders (Ward, Martin, & Distiller, 2007).

#### 5.2.2.1 *The influence of dispositions associated with symbolic capital*

The *bling* and potential material wealth associated with the gangster lifestyle was evident in the participants' occupational choices. Choosing to project an image of *bling* became a way of projecting competence and confidence. *Bling* was one way of symbolically communicating status. The elevated economic and symbolic status afforded to gang culture was illustrated in the findings. Young adolescents saw members of subcultures with symbolic status as powerful. Being a part of, or even just knowing a substantial amount about this subculture gave participants credibility within their community. This formed part of the internalised dispositions that participants developed. Young adolescents were familiar from a young age with the common dispositions towards occupations of people in Lavender Hill. Their dispositions were powerfully reinforced by their exposure to others with similar dispositions. Making occupational choices that reflected their common dispositions as shaped in Lavender Hill was second nature to adolescents. The social processes associated with developing common dispositions to engaging in occupations was integrated into and expressed through the occupational choices that they made. It also seemed that this awareness was a part of belonging to the community of Lavender Hill. This was evident in the language, interaction and values implicit in their occupational choices. The relationship between choice and social processes is supported by the perspective that these are essential processes for human life (Harre, 1986). It has been proposed that black adolescents embrace and aspire to the capitalism, individualism and competition associated with the American culture (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997).

#### 5.2.2.2 *The peer group's dispositions influence occupational choice*

Peer groups were essential to the young adolescents' social processes in Lavender Hill. They created a structure resulting in particular occupational choices and occupational engagement. Occupational choice was reinforced by the peer networks through the

recognition and affirmation of belonging to a peer group. *Ek en my tjomnies* (My friends and I) illustrated how young adolescents experienced friendship, trust and a sense of community in their groups. It appeared that this contributed to the young adolescents' sense of place. Having a sense of place contributes to meaning experienced during occupational engagement (Hasselkus, 2002).

Affiliation to the peer group influenced the individual and collective occupational choices which young adolescents made. The valued relations between peers affirmed the occupations that were engaged in and gave the young adolescents social honour. The social positions that young adolescents held within the peer group contributed to their internalised dispositions that influenced them to make particular occupational choices. It also created a space where collective occupational choices were possible. This collective space could be experienced as supportive by the individual. The peer-regulated networks affirmed one another's dispositions to act in ways that were consistent with the common occupations and culture in Lavender Hill.

The findings of this study identified that peers shared similar dispositions and subsequently made similar occupational choices. This is viewed as the opportunity provided through peers (van Lier, Vitaro, & Eisner, 2007). These dispositions or outlooks shaped the occupational choices that young adolescents made. Groups are known to construct habitus in this way and in so doing, have the capacity to direct situations (Singlewood, 2000). That peer regulated networks played this role is supported by the well-documented recognition of the importance of peers in young adolescents' personal development (Dawes & Donald, 2000; Zettergren, 2005).

The findings showed that peer groups held greater sway over individuals' daily occupational choices than their parents or guardians did. The power of peers as resources has been noticed by advocates of youth participation in facilitating social change (Gartner & Riessman, 1999). Potential negative subjective norms exerted as result of peer groups has also received much attention in research and literature (Bamaca & Umana-Taylor, 2006; Haynie & Osgood, 2005; Selikow, Ahmed, Flisher, Matthews, & Mukoma, 2009). The current study emphasised the role of social capital in understanding occupational choice. This understanding was reflected in the significance of the peer group. Similar to findings by Morrow (1999) it is recognised that the influence of social processes that create social capital is an important consideration. Also, since social capital is known to affect well-being (Putnam, 2000), occupational



choice too may affect well-being. Research with African-American adolescents living in inner city ghettos has shown that social capital contributes to the quality of life of adolescents (Fitzpatrick, Piko, Wright, & LaGory, 2005). They recommended that further research explored the specific way in which the components of social capital functioned. In summary, it is asserted that occupational choice is influenced by social capital within a group and that the social processes associated with the social capital also have an influence.

#### *5.2.2.3 The influence of the peers' social processes on patterns of occupational choices*

The peer groups encouraged occupational choices that were consistent with the patterns of occupations and dominant dispositions of people living in Lavender Hill. Peers and the social networks formed through grouping together created a structure that expected particular patterns of occupational choices. The networks of peers influenced participants to see themselves as able to access the opportunities available to the working class community. The emphasis was on what was there and using these experiences in a gratifying way.

Peers engaged in occupations that were similar and in relation to those of their peers. The peer group was supportive in their actions and shared interpretations of the context. Participants' daily occupational choices were influenced by the group that they associated with and by the social practices and context of Lavender Hill. Although individuals selected to engage in occupations, this selection was weighted by the occupational choices that were prevalent in the group and community. Similarly, research on adolescent alcohol abuse has shown that the structural properties of peer relationships influence this behaviour (Ennet et al., 2006). This meant that occupational choice did not function solely as an individual construct. Occupational choice was co-constructed by the individual and social context. The limited range of intellectual, physical and personal demands placed on peers in Lavender Hill gave adolescents' peer groups few opportunities to develop their capacities and make occupational choices that grew their occupational repertoires. The limited range of available occupations in Lavender Hill limited the young adolescents' views on what occupational choices could be made. The neighbourhood that adolescents live in is known to influence the resources to which they have access (Bernard et al., 2007). The co-construction of culture and action through peer groups is recognised in recent interpretive approaches

to children's socialisation (Kyratzis, 2004). The co-construction could be developed so that diverse patterns of engaging in occupations are enhanced and promoted. This could promote diversity of demands for occupational engagement in contrast to the narrow range of demands placed on young adolescents in Lavender Hill.

Familiarity between peers was developed by participating in occupations together. Considering their young age, the lack of active adult involvement in the selection and participation in occupations was striking. The category *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) showed that this may have involved repeated participation in occupations together and also imitation of performance. The repetition and imitation could be referred to as social processes that instinctively inform the way that occupations are performed in a particular context (Jenkins, 1992). The associated social relatedness is important to occupation (Lawlor, 2003a) and occupational choice. Peers shared knowledge of the occupations that community members engaged in. *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) illustrated that the acceptance between peers of the nature of these occupations offered comfort between peers.

The positions that participants occupied as members of their peer groups allowed them to contribute to the networks between peer groups. The social positions and being liked or disliked has been shown to be significant to the development of prosocial behaviours (Gest, Graham-Bermann, & Hartup, 2001). The social processes and social positions that young adolescents held within their peer groups influenced the patterns of occupational choices made by individuals. In turn, the peer groups' and individuals' patterns were influenced by social hierarchies existing in the community of Lavender Hill.

#### *5.2.2.4 The influence of social hierarchies on occupational choice*

The participants were part of an age group whose time after school and occupational choice are traditionally still supervised by their parents. However in this community, these young people were given the freedom and responsibility to make occupational choices relatively independently. This freedom added value to the function of peer groups, but reduced adults' power to influence young adolescents' occupational choices. Young adolescents exerted their power over younger children, reflected in the instance where Clive reported "*En toe force hulle hom, toe vat hulle die foto.*" (*And then they forced him and then they took the photo*). Furthermore, the peer group perpetuated the patterns of

young adolescents' occupational choices since they were exposed to a limited range of occupations and their occupational choices may then have been limited to this narrow spectrum.

The section above identified the factors within the subcultures influencing occupational choice as the social groups, social processes; hierarchy and ultimately the transactional nature of occupational choice. These factors influenced occupational choice in an intersectional way. Intersectionality has been applied to analysing ways that different social divisions, such as class, race and ethnicity are constructed by and intermeshed with each other in the construction of identity (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Similarly the social divisions and structures were shown to simultaneously influence and be influenced by occupational choice in this study. The composite way in which these influences were exerted had an effect on the convoluted nature of occupational choice. This will be elaborated upon later.

### **5.2.3 Occupational choice influenced by the competition for capital within Lavender Hill**

The theme *Is net so* (It's just like that) suggested that the young adolescents' struggle for capital impacted on the occupational choices that they made. The available forms of capital, that is the available resources, guided their occupational choices. The following section describes how the participants' use of social capital intersected during occupational choices with attempts to acquire symbolic and economic capital.

#### *5.2.3.1 Creating the impression of access to economic capital*

Having or knowing about material goods was another way that young adolescents who participated in this study gained status. The findings described examples of the young adolescents' knowledge of the brand names of athletic shoes, beers and most trendy models of cellphones. This was illustrated by Kimmy saying "Castle proe nie lekker nie" (Castle (beer) does not taste nice). The findings suggest that young adolescents perceived this identification as a mechanism to align themselves with people who had more economic capital. This strategy was supported by the dispositions or habitus of young adolescents, their peers and the adults in the community.

Adults in Lavender Hill seemed to support young adolescents' impressions of having access to economic resources by striving to provide them with some material goods and symbolic status in the short-term. Conventionally, it is assumed that adults,

especially parents are able to positively assist young adolescents with negotiating their long-term goals (Wang, Peterson, & Morphey, 2007). However findings showed that many adults focused little attention on mechanisms that would enable diverse long-term outcomes. The implication of this was that young adolescents did not make occupational choices that supported the development of their long-term goals. Instead they strived to appear successful in their immediate environment through the occupations that they engaged in. This contributed to creating fields of action that encouraged the pursuit of prestige without developing their capacity to generate economic capital in the long-term. It is advocated that the presence of western ideological symbols at all levels of the social fabric has left South African youth in a position where they are marginalised from their social realities (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997). This is recognised as an outcome of globalisation and consumerism where adolescents embody the desire for designer labels in their identities (Griffin, 1993). Macro factors such as these are known to influence individuals' choices (Cuff et al., 2006). It is suggested that young adolescents were influenced by the macro factors and this influenced and was interpreted by them when making occupational choices. Making the occupational choices and acting on these choices led to engagement in occupations. Thus occupational choice was the way in which macro social factors influenced the micro sociological world. This is supported by the view that occupational engagement is shaped by underlying occupational determinants (Wilcock, 1998a).

#### *5.2.3.2 The intersection between social and symbolic capital*

The theme, *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) illustrated that the participants used their positions as peers to make occupational choices that matched their desire for status. The findings of this study further highlighted that drawing on their peers as social capital offered immediate rather than delayed gratification. The immediate gratification was often in the form of prestige as a result of the occupational choice made. An example of this was the stature associated with being able to perform highly regarded dance moves in front of peers. This was consistent with the expectations described in the category *Wies wys* (Be sussed). The desire to aspire towards immediate, symbolic capital was described in the aforementioned category. This was expected since most young adolescents attempted to make occupational choices that earned them favour in their peers' eyes. Consequently the young adolescents held little

consideration for the long-term value and implications of their choices. Diverting attention to immediate short-term goals is recognised as common for young adolescents as they aspire to identify with peers (Wang et al., 2007).

This characteristic permeated through the peers and gangs as pervasive subcultures in Lavender Hill. Competing for symbolic capital affected the occupational choices they made and shaped their occupational repertoires. It appeared to foreground or even be seen as equivalent to economic capital. This influenced their current occupational choices in that they appeared reliant on creating or using opportunities available in their immediate environments. This had significant consequences since it meant that the participants made occupational choices which were homogenous with the limited opportunities in the context despite their understanding that the choice could not contribute to achieving their dreams in the long-term.

The way that they attempted to realise these aspirations was through conforming and drawing on available social and political resources and positions already available in Lavender Hill. It is suggested that it may impact negatively on their economic mobility in the long-term.

#### 5.2.4 Occupational choice interfaces with low educational expectations

The study findings showed that the young adolescents' occupational choices were not engaged in within their formal school system. Instead the low expectations emanating within the community was consistent with the majority of academic expectations at school. The following section explores key issues in the relationship between the way occupational choices occurred in the theme *Is net so* (It's just like that) and the apparently low educational expectations.

##### 5.2.4.1 Formal education arena offers limited affirmation

Young adolescents' occupations at school were often associated with misbehaving or underperforming. They diverted a considerable amount of attention to what was seen as *hulle gaan aan* (they are misbehaving). They used moments in between classes or outside the formal education curriculum to show this part of themselves. The young adolescents experienced that this expression of their identities did not easily find a place in the formal education arena. The formal arena refers to the world of the institutions, whereas the informal arena is the worlds of customs, values and ideas that

are tacitly shared, such as amongst peers (Soudien, 2007a) and people in a community. Both the formal and informal arenas are essential to the development of identity. For young adolescents in this study, many occupational choices associated with parts of their identity did not receive an affirmative reception or were not productively engaged with in the school setting. The occupational choices as shown in *Wies wys* (Be sussed), which young adolescents took for granted in their everyday lives did not seem to find a place for expression and discussion at school. This creates concern since the school is said to be one of the most important areas where a child develops (Soudien 2007b). It is meant to be a place where young people are able to engage beyond with what they are expected to be based on their expected identity positions (Soudien 2007b). Sadly, the current study identified that the school did not offer the opportunity for exploration beyond expected identity positions. It is suggested that this mitigates against creative thinking that breaks past practices (Weber, 2008). Adults in the community, even some educators (who may not have been from the community) held similar low expectations of young adolescents. This meant that poor academic performance was expected as the norm. These scholarly occupations usually influence the way that adolescents use their time (Ziviani, Lim, Jendra-Smith, & Nolan, 2008).

#### *5.2.4.2 School offered a limited range of opportunities for occupational engagement*

One of the dynamics contributing to the way that the formal education arena influenced occupational choice was that schools contributed minimally to building young adolescents' capacities to develop or extend their repertoire of occupational choices. The limited opportunity to actively engage with their dispositions towards occupational choice contributed to pedestrian expectations related to education. The low expectations of diversity of occupational choice reinforced the hegemonic occupational patterns experienced in Lavender Hill. This view is supported by the argument that some schools continue to perpetuate the residues of apartheid's logic (Soudien, 2007b). It limited their opportunity to earn a good quality basic education or to build a broad repertoire of occupational choices. The consequence of this may be that young adolescents in Lavender Hill then restrict their academic possibilities to the narrow range of immediately available opportunities in Lavender Hill. Furthermore, their occupational choices associated with formal education may have been experienced as unfamiliar and distant compared to everyday occupational choices in Lavender Hill.

Changing the institutional culture at schools has been shown to be challenging (Vandeyar, 2008). The ongoing, restricted perspective resulted in participants conforming with the way occupational choices were made in Lavender Hill through acting on the knowledge and attitude of *Wies wys* (Be sussed).

The limited diversity of co-curricular activities at school gave young adolescents little power to exert their right to choose different occupations and to gain the associated benefit and experience of a diverse range of occupations. The assumption that the power to exert choice over preferences and access occupations (Polatajko et al., 2007b) did not hold entirely true here. Participants in the study engaged in the range of occupations that were available to them at school or sometimes did not access available opportunities. The school system tended to narrow its focus to the young adolescents' academic performance, discounting their ways of being or their associated skills. This is of concern since it is known that the broader social context impacts on the experience of being at school (Dawson, 2007). The inclinations to accept this way of being was affirmed by following that *Is net so* (It's just like that) in Lavender Hill. This translated into the acceptance of the compromised nature of participation and being subservient to the limited opportunities or not even accessing these limited opportunities to participate at school. Similar findings were shown in a study with poorer African-American youth where their expectations and aspirations reflected the realities that surrounded them (Cook et al., 1996).

### 5.3 The enfolded and convoluted nature of occupational choice

The analysis of the data suggested that occupational choice was enfolded and convoluted in nature. The enfolded and convoluted nature of occupational choice was common to all occupational choices. The enfolded nature of occupational choice is firstly presented, while the convoluted nature is presented towards the end of this discussion.

#### 5.3.1 The enfolded nature of occupational choice

The findings suggest that the nature of occupational choice is such that it exists through occupations in the realm of interconnection between young adolescents making occupational choices and the context of Lavender Hill; occupational choice exists through the individual's implicit interpretation of their context. The young adolescents'

occupational choices were real, but were not always obvious. Their occupational choices seemed to exist in the folds of their occupational engagement. This affirmed that occupational choice only exists in relation to occupational engagement. That is, their occupational choices seemed to be implicit in occupational engagement. The parts of an occupation are inseparable from the whole context or enfolded nature of occupational choice. This was reflected in the findings in that the occupational and temporal qualities of occupational choice together with the way that the young adolescents' choices were made contributed to the enfolded nature of occupational choice. The qualities of the enfolded nature of occupational choice together with the manner of making occupational choices are described below.

#### *5.3.1.1 Occupational quality of occupational choice*

The young adolescents' occupational choices were inherent in the descriptions of their occupations, as described in the theme, *Is net so* (It's just like that). The occupational quality of occupational choice was shown in the relationship between the choices that they made and the occupations that they engaged in. Occupational choice emerged during their descriptions of their occupational engagement. The young adolescents' descriptions of their occupational engagement reflected that their occupational choices were shrouded by their participation in occupations. This was consistent with the assumptions made by occupational therapy theorists (Bonder, 2007a; Minato & Zemke, 2004). Young adolescents were able to describe their occupational choices by describing their occupational engagement. This provides evidence that occupation and choice are connected through engagement in occupations.

Young adolescents were also able to construct their occupational choices in relation to their participation in occupations. This is supported by the knowledge that an element of choice is part of the initiation and continuation of occupational patterns (Pierce, 2003b) and occupational performance (Poulsen & Ziviani, 2006). The conceptualisation of choice is viewed as one of the first steps in the discretionary or non-discretionary selection of activities (Pierce, 2003b). The current study consolidates the definition of occupational choice by proposing that occupational choice occurs when an individual implicitly or explicitly applies their agency to their occupational engagement. For example when the participant and their peers decided to dance in front of each other, they made an occupational choice. This occupational choice had an



occupation as an outcome. However occupational choice can also have no tangible outcome. For example, when young adolescents engaged in the occupation of making an occupational choice, as described in their deliberations of what to do in *Ek en my tjomnies* (My friends and I), an occupation was that they deliberated what occupational choice to make.

With regard to doing, the findings showed that although more than one occupation could be available within the context, the young adolescents instinctively chose to engage in one, overlooking others. Possible reasons for this may be related to the individual and influences within the context. These are elaborated on later. For now, their selection of a particular occupation may show that although multiple occupational choices may be available in a context, the young adolescent tends to make one occupational choice leading to a particular occupational engagement. The contextual rules associated with participating in occupations, as revealed in *Ek en my tjomnies* (My friends and I) concurred with their selected occupational choices. Consequently, occupational choices appeared to be at one with the uninspected assumptions inherent in *Is net so* (It's just like that). It appeared to shape the occupational engagement and patterns of occupations. Based on the findings, the participants allocated time to occupations relative to the range and repertoire of occupations that they engaged in. Participants spoke overtly about the time spent engaging in occupations, rather than the occupational choices made. This was to be expected since engagement in occupations was dependent on an occupational choice being made. This is elaborated upon below.

Interestingly, it appeared that making occupational choices could be an occupation that young adolescents engaged in. The findings illustrated this in the instances where the participants were spending time considering what to do with their time. This was time spent making occupational choices. They appeared to toss ideas between each other, testing the possibilities of engaging in the occupation. It created an open space for any member of the peer group to give a suggestion that could be taken further. Once suggestions were made, it seemed that they imagined themselves engaging in it or had a conversation almost as if they were doing the suggested occupation. The experience of an occupation through imagination may be likened to the proposition that daydreaming can also be an occupation (Nicholls, 2004). This is in keeping with the perspective that an occupation can be engaged in and enjoyed without physically performing it (Polatajko et al., 2008a). The peers tested possibilities and continued to engage in the

occupation of making occupational choices until they perhaps found one that the peer group instinctively agreed to participate in. It appeared that young adolescents participated in this way when they were hanging out with each other. This offers a fresh interpretation on the occupation of hanging out. The testing or perhaps experiencing of the occupation, together with their consideration of the contextual support influenced their actual engagement in the occupation.

Further to this, the findings showed that there were instances when the participants articulated their occupational choices prior to their performance of an occupation. The young adolescents in this study planned some of their occupational engagement. Self-directed, planned occupations seemed to occur within their informal, rather than formal, institutional contexts. Furthermore, limited planned engagement appeared to be planned on their behalf outside of the structured, classroom lessons. Their plans within the informal, usually social arena were often arranged to emulate the *bling* lifestyle that they were attracted to. This attraction was elaborated upon within the section on competition for capital above. Their planned occupations momentarily offered a reality that their social status was higher, but remained in keeping with the limited available trajectory for young adolescents in Lavender Hill. This is corroborated by the perspective that social background influences participation in occupations (Wilcock, 1998b; Poulsen & Ziviani, 2006).

In terms of the occupational quality of occupational choice, it is emphasised that the process of engaging in an occupation while making an occupational choice may mean that the beginning and ends of choices are not clearly defined. Subsequently, occupational choice is not only reflected explicitly in the occupation engaged, but also has a component that occurs during occupational engagement. This is significant since the focus in occupational therapy has tended to be on the choice in terms of the occupation that is engaged in rather than the choice that is constructed through engaging in the occupation. However, a single occupational choice was noticeable through the decision to engage in a particular occupation rather than another. This meant that the occupational choices could be made while doing an occupation and did not necessarily precede the engagement in an occupation. This is supported by research conducted from the perspective of measuring the way that time is used for different occupations (Ziviani et al., 2008).

The occupations that young adolescents in Lavender Hill engaged in, generated particular patterns of occupational choices. The emergence of patterns of occupational choice at an individual level provides confirmation for the fundamental proposal that, to engage in occupations is to exercise one's choice and take control (Yerxa et al., 1989). The categories of this study revealed that the young adolescents' occupational choices proceeded to provide direction for and shaped their prospective occupational engagement. This is congruent with the metaphor of occupation as an instrument for biographical continuity given the opportunity that it presents to gain control and make choices (Clark & Jackson, 1989; Polkinghorne, 1996; Wicks, 2005).

The study drew attention to the relationship between occupation, occupational choice and the individual as a self-determining agent. Importantly, for young adolescents making occupational choices in Lavender Hill at the present time in post-apartheid South Africa, being a self-determining agent included negotiating the legacies associated with their context. This augments the established understanding of the temporal relationship between one's stage of human development and the environment (Poulsen & Ziviani 2006). While implicitly navigating the historical legacy and present contextual influences, young adolescents' occupational choices were also shaped by their individual agency. Thus occupational choice was simultaneously constructed at different levels. At each of the individual, group and community levels, common patterns of occupational choice were evident. The relationship between the levels of occupational choice complements the occupational perspectives on public health (Wilcock & Hocking, 2004).

The categories *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) and *Wies wys* (Be sussed) illustrated that the occupational choices made by the participants were nested in the occupational choices common to Lavender Hill. Godwin's mom echoed this, referring to the pattern relate to his education, saying that "Ek wil nie hê Godwin moet dieselfde pad loop as wat sy broer geloop het nie" (I do not want Godwin to follow the same path as the path of his brother). Occupational choice thus operated in patterns at an individual, young adolescent level and has a transactional relationship with the community, Lavender Hill, level. The occupational choice seemed to be embedded in the occupations engaged in within these levels. Furthermore, the intergenerational presence of occupations suggested that occupational choice influenced the continuity of patterns of occupations. The nested nature of occupational choice was also influenced by the historical patterns

since these patterns predicated the available occupations. This contributed to the compactness of the enfolded nature of occupational choice.

The findings also progressed to uncover that the patterns of occupational engagement influenced the individual's occupational choices and the individual's occupational choices influenced the patterns of occupations at an individual and community level. It is suggested that continuity of, and action on occupational choice occurs through the mutuality of the relationship between occupational engagement and occupational choice, together with the levels at which this occurs. This continuity and action are in accordance with a transactional view of occupation (Cutchin, Aldrich, Baillard, & Coppola, 2008). The transactional nature of occupation emphasises that habitus may be used to understand the patterns of occupations (Pierce, 2003b). I extend on this by suggesting that the homogeneity in and hegemony of the young adolescents' occupational choices may be explained by understanding occupational choice as a conduit for habitus. This occurs in relation to the way that the field and capital influences occupational choice (as previously discussed in the context section). Given that habitus, capital and field are dynamic, patterns of occupational choices could possibly change if these factors are altered. This line of reasoning buttresses the view that occupation can be understood from a "broader community context and subsequently the community can be understood as facilitating or inhibiting the well-being of its members" (Krupa, Radloff-Gabriel, Whippey, & Kirsh, 2002 pg 156).

#### *5.3.1.2 Practical consciousness shaping occupational choice*

The process of making occupational choices had an implicit quality that appeared to be tacitly applied by the young adolescents. The tacit process associated with occupational choices involved the young adolescents' interpretations of their occupational and contextual factors (as described above). This may be likened to practical consciousness which refers to a practical sense or know-how that guides the way that people operate as social agents (Bourdieu 1977). The findings repeatedly revealed that young adolescents' occupational engagement and implicitly their occupational choices were steered by practical, instinctual interpretations. The findings supported that occupational choices could be deliberate and spontaneous or seeming automatic. This was in contrast to Kielhofner's definition of occupational choice as only deliberate

choices (Kielhofner, 2008b). The young adolescents' occupational engagement was explicit, while the process of making the occupational choice appeared to be embedded.

The young adolescents' occupational choices reflected that their knowledge contradicted their actions and their actions contradicted what they were formally taught to be correct. Instead, they intuitively acted in line with the expectations associated with *Wies wys* (Be sussed). Their intellectual, rational knowledge competed with their tacit, experiential knowledge. From a young age, their experiential knowledge appeared to guide many of the occupational choices that they made. This experiential knowledge guiding action referred to forms of know-how and competence that was relative to the context that adolescents engaged in. The findings showed that the contradiction in their occupational choices persisted, uninspected. This was noticeable in the category *Wies wys* (Be sussed) when Richard smoked tobacco cigarettes, but stated that you should not "*want jy kan borskanker kry en daai geode*" (because you can get chest cancer and all that). The young adolescents appeared to be engrossed by the contextual factors so that they made unspoken occupational choices. This seemed to be similar to the description of knowledge and skills that we cannot put into words, but informs the way we act (Giddens, 1993). Young adolescents who participated in this study appeared to have difficulty with unambiguously expressing the complexity of their occupational choices. Their difficulty with succinctly articulating the complexity of occupational choices corroborated the impression that the process of making occupational choices was implicit and not always deliberate. This diverges from the explicit way that choices have been constructed in occupational therapy theory.

It may be put forward that the occupations that they engaged in together with the contextual factors shaped their implicit occupational choices. This is supported by the view that their instinctual ways of doing appeared to be regulated by the subcultures associated with the subgroups in Lavender Hill. It appeared that young adolescents implicitly considered the contextual expectations and the positions of symbolic status that they negotiated. Common examples of these were the poses that the girls chose and the breakdance moves that the boys displayed. They appeared to implicitly consider how their performance would appeal to their peers. Furthermore, practical consciousness influenced not only what occupations were chosen, but also shaped the way that the young adolescents engaged in occupations. An illustration of the young adolescents' practical sense being operationalised was when participants primed

themselves for the possibility of a brawl or an argument when interacting with others. In these instances, they were instinctively aware that being cheeky or aggressive was the right way to be. At the same time, they prepared for the possible occupational choices that they may have had to make or the possible consequences of showing themselves in the particular manner. A contradiction between their practical sense and wanting to be and do things differently appeared. It looked as though little explicit consideration was given for meaning or purpose. Instead participants made occupational choices and may have experienced personal meaning and a sense of purpose during the occupational engagement. This offers a view of the construction of meaning as obscured in the engagement in occupation, thus rendering it challenging to explicitly articulate. Congruent with the view of meaning as constructed during occupational engagement is the view that meaning perspectives and schemes generate habitual actions (Townsend et al., 2008). The ongoing flow of meaning construction may be likened to the notion of "preconceptual or felt meaning" (Jackson, 1998, pg 470) which is integral to daily occupations. This form of experiencing meaning as unarticulated potentially contributes to one's evolving self-concept (Jackson, 1998). From the individual's perspective, it has been proposed that purpose may change during occupational performance and that this may modify the experience of meaning and purpose (Humphry, 2005). Through perpetuating existing assumptions, such as those associated with being part of a coloured working class, the tacit process of making occupational choices seemed to contribute to the hegemony of young adolescents' occupational choices. The possible variation of meaning and purpose during occupational engagement influenced and was influenced by the young adolescents' occupational choice. It is suggested that the intuitive way of making occupational choice together with the limited reflection on the long-term impact of occupational choices may play a part in maintaining existing occupational patterns across time as described in *Is net so* (It's just like that).

#### *5.3.1.3 The temporal quality of occupational choice*

Unfolding the temporal quality of occupational choice allows one to appreciate that occupational choice occurs across periods of time. The current study is being related at a particular point in history, that is, fifteen years after the demise of the institutionalised racism associated with apartheid. This is a time where young adolescents of different

racial groups are framed by politicians as part of the rainbow nation and it is assumed that different groups are living together in harmony (Habib, 1996). The differences in capabilities and socio-economic class are but two significant areas that this metaphor brushes over (Pierce, 2003b). Consistent with the scepticism of the likelihood of the existence of a rainbow nation, the findings of this study questioned the extent to which the young adolescents were truly integrated or liberated as young citizens. The hegemonic nature of the young adolescents' occupational choices reflected the legacy of apartheid. Given the view that post-apartheid South Africa refers to more than just the end of apartheid, but involves breaking with the ways of being and thinking associated with apartheid, it is argued that young adolescents in Lavender Hill were not truly liberated. From a global view, the young adolescents' accounts were also relative to the influence of the technologically advanced, global village. This was particularly evident in the way that consumerist values influenced their occupational choices.

It was also established that young adolescents' dispositions towards their occupations contributed to shaping the occupational choices that they made and ultimately the way that they used their time. The subjective experience of engaging in occupations has been phrased as temporality and is said to influence occupational engagement (Farnworth & Fossey, 2003). Also, dispositions were generated across generations in Lavender Hill and influenced the young adolescents' dispositions towards their occupations. The resultant dispositions intersected with the occupational expectations associated with the context to influence occupational choice. The intersection was evident in the way that elements of the predicated patterns, competition for capital, the various subcultures and educational expectations were embedded in the occupational choices made by young adolescents across periods of time. For example, the young adolescents' occupational choices reflected that their perceptions of time use mimicked the poor long-term expectations that were known in the community. The intergenerational occupational patterns in the community predicated the occupational choices that young adolescents made and informed the occupational construction of time producing perceptions and values regarding how time was perceived and used by young adolescents. The attitude towards time was reflective of the fast-paced attitude captured when participants, such as Marco were able to *Wies wys* (Be sussed) and "Skel" (scold) in the moment. The attitude was reflected in the expectation that participants were *wakker* (awake) in the way that they

used their time in a contextually efficient way to make occupational choices. This meant that the use of time was influenced by the nature of the social relationships within the context and this impacted on the occupational choices made.

The young adolescents' taxonomies of time included definitions in relation to the places where they engaged in occupations. These included being at school, at the games shops, at home, or time spent in the different streets. Young adolescents spent their time in these places and made occupational choices there. It alerts one to the possibility of altering the places in order to influence the occupational choices that young adolescents made. This is supported by the perspective that place has an influence on the kinds of occupations engaged in (Hocking, 1994).

Thus, on a more micro-level, the young adolescents' occupational choices were constructed and occurred in relation to time. This 'time' broadly referred to the time taken to make occupational choices and to engage in the occupation of making occupational choices. Young adolescents naturally described the consecutive occupations that they engaged in. To arrive at the consecutive occupations involved taking time to make occupational choices sequentially. This meant that time was inherent in making occupational choices. This is supported by the association between time and occupation recognised early on in occupational science (Christiansen, 1996). The findings of this study reasserted the significance of time as a contributing factor to occupational choice and thus occupation.

Furthermore, time was taken to engage in occupations and generate occupational choices. This is supported by research on time and occupation that has predominantly explored time-use patterns as an expression of what occupations are engaged in (Stanley, 1995; Ziviani, Lim, Jendra-Smith, & Nolan, 2008). The findings showed that when the participants were scanning their environment for opportunities to engage, they were explicitly using their time to make occupational choices. It seemed possible for young adolescents to perform more than one occupation at a time, for example, listening to music and having a conversation. It follows then that multiple occupational choices could be possible at one time. Each of the occupational choices may be influenced by the synthesis of various factors described here. In summary, time use was constructed through the occupational choices that they made and this resulted in engagement in particular occupations. Consequently, it is suggested that time was occupationally constructed for young adolescents in Lavender Hill.



In conclusion, the occupational and temporal qualities together with the practical conscious way of making occupational choices played a part in the enfolded nature of occupational choice. This enfolded nature related undividedly with the contextual factors in Lavender Hill to produce the young adolescents' convoluted occupational choices. The following section elaborates on the convoluted nature of the process of making occupational choices.

### **5.3.2 The convoluted nature of occupational choice**

The convoluted nature of making occupational choice came about through the involved relationship between the enfolded nature of occupational choice and the contextual factors within Lavender Hill. It is proposed that the involved relationship may contribute to the contextual relevance of occupational choice and the coherence of patterns of occupational choice. The young adolescents' occupational choices were visible as a whole within their context-bound occupational engagement. The complex process of making occupational choices was not immediately evident. It is proposed that occupational engagement shadowed the intricate nature of occupational choice. The following section suggests that the contextual relevance of occupational choice and the coherent quality of occupational choice are two qualities that render occupational choice as intricate.

#### **5.3.2.1 Contextual relevance of occupational choice**

The factors within the context were critical in shaping and being shaped by the enfolded nature of young adolescents' occupational choices. The influences of the various factors within the context were previously explained. Of importance here is that occupational choice existed as a combined influence of factors within the context and the qualities of the enfolded nature of occupational choice. The influence of these factors and qualities made occupational choice more than just an individual construct. Occupational choice is thus approached from a contextual, group perspective rather than an individual perspective. This is supported by the view that young people are rooted in social structures (Soudien, 2007) and concurs with the proposition that occupations emerge through processes associated with societal, social and individual levels (Humphry, 2005). Following with the proposition that occupation emerges through the abovementioned levels, it has also been asserted that these are not just the "backdrop to

development, but are essential parts of the whole" (Humphry, 2005, p. 42). In this study, the context influenced the occupational choices that young adolescents made. On the other hand, the participants, as (social) agents were continuously recreating their context through their hegemonic occupational choices.

The findings revealed that young adolescents appeared to pay attention to some occupational choices, disregarding, perhaps not even recognising that others existed. This was previously explained as the influence of their dispositions on occupational choices. However, it also became apparent that young adolescents' occupational choices fitted with the interests of the context and the enfolded nature of occupational choice. The young adolescents' occupational choices were pertinent to the context of Lavender Hill. The factors within the context shaped the undisputed congruence of their occupational choices to the context. Furthermore, the perceived available and potential occupations in the context of Lavender Hill framed the appropriateness of young adolescents' occupational choices. Through young adolescents' accounts, this study drew attention to the way that the process of making occupational choices mediated the interaction between the context, occupation and the young adolescent. This provides a perspective of considering the contextual relevance of occupational choices. This may offer an expanded view of the way that control has been seen as dependent on the opportunities available in the environment (Law et al., 1996). The category *Ek en my tjomnies* (My friends and I) further described their implicit way of making occupational choices as scaffolded within the occupational engagement of groups of peers.

Acknowledging the cumulative, composite influence of components of the social structure on the emerging patterns of occupational choice emphasised the fluid property of occupational choice. This fluidity means that the occupational choices are open to change. Strategies for change could emerge by an intersectional analysis of the young adolescents' identity and the way that this interfaces with the composite influence of the contextual factors. This is supported by the view of agency that recognises that there is interdependence between an individual's needs and the environmental demands (Cassell, 1993). A sense of the fluidity of occupational choice was noticeable in the way that the participants' occupational choices could vary within their context. It appeared that this could be swayed by who they were interacting with, what occupations they could potentially engage in, where they were engaging and the

reasons for their engagement. The fluidity rendered the contextual relevance of occupational choice as dynamic. It signalled that changes to the young adolescents' occupational choices may be possible. However, the findings revealed that currently participants tended to follow what was done and known to be done in Lavender Hill (as previously described). The limitations of their internalised dispositions may not have inclined them to entertain the dynamic quality of occupational choice by accessing a broader range of occupations. This resulted in the view that for young adolescents in Lavender Hill, occupational choice was a mechanism that contributed to the production of structures and social systems that led to particular patterns of occupations.

Limited findings indicated that when new or additional occupations became available, they seemed to have considered engaging in these, but would not necessarily actively engage. The possibility of accessing new opportunities is consistent with the assumption that occupational choices can change (Polatajko et al., 2007a). Furthermore, early adolescents' vocational and educational aspirations are heavily reliant on what is perceived as accessible (Akos, Lambie, Milsom, & Gilbert, Oct 2007). The fluidity of occupational choice as a result of the fluidity of context may be the mechanism through which occupational choices may be changed. However, it is suggested that this mechanism will not be successful if it is solely reliant on the exposure to new or different occupations. This is because the factors within the context (Section 5.2.1-5.2.3) together with the nature of occupational choice (Section 5.3) influence occupational choice synergistically. For young adolescents in Lavender Hill the right to participate in occupations existed constitutionally, however it could not be fully accessed and exercised within institutions such as schools. It was also not well-supported by the adults in the community. This reduced the young adolescents' power to explore and build on their repertoire of occupational choices. This highlights the complexity associated with accessing the right to occupational choices.

The occupational choices contributed to societal structure through perpetuating patterns of occupations in an uninterrupted way. The patterns of occupational choices were vested in social and occupational structures and the findings showed that the continuity of these depended on the young adolescents' perpetuated patterns of occupational choices and occupational engagement. It appeared that occupational choice played a part in binding the social and occupational structure to the individual as the social agent. This contributed to maintaining hegemonic patterns of occupational

engagement for young adolescents in Lavender Hill. In essence, the young adolescents' engagement in occupations was shaped by the social structure of Lavender Hill as part of South African society, but also actively contributed to the way that this society was structured. The relationship between occupational choice, social and occupational structure played a part in bringing about the convoluted nature of occupational choice.

#### *5.3.2.2 Coherent quality of patterns of occupational choice*

One of the processes of making occupational choices was that the enfolded nature of occupational choice and the contextual relevance of occupational choice merged to produce occupational choices through occupations. It is asserted that the image that one sees is the image of the person engaging in the occupation, rather than the complexity of occupational choice. However, occupational choice exists simultaneously as a precursor and a coherent part of occupational engagement. The convoluted nature of occupational choice exists in the relationships between the parts and the whole. The relationships between the parts are explained below.

The young adolescents implicitly described their occupational choices as undivided in the theme *Is net so* (It's just like that). The coherence of the patterns of the young adolescents' occupational choices came about as a result of the composite influence of the contextual relevance and temporal qualities of occupational choice at individual, group and community levels. The intersection of these qualities is described here. Over time the young adolescents' occupational choices were enfolded in their patterns of occupational engagement in Lavender Hill. In their descriptions, their patterns and experiences of making occupational choices were deeply connected to their contextually-bound occupational engagement. This contributed to the coherent quality of the convoluted nature of occupational choice. The findings further illustrated that their constellation of occupational choices at individual, group and community levels could be seen in the extensive patterns of occupational choices of young adolescents in Lavender Hill. The patterns of their occupational choices emerged as synchronous across these levels and across time. The tacit relationships and unity between the enfolded nature and contextual factors influencing occupational choice perhaps explicates the coherence of the patterns of the young adolescents' occupational choices.

Further to this, young adolescents did not seem to explicitly consider the parts of their occupational choices. Instead they seemed to consider occupational choice as part of their practical consciousness within the context (as previously explained). Of significance was that occupation related to occupational choice as a whole rather than as its constituent parts. This is different from the way that occupation is often deconstructed and eventually practised by some (Whiteford, Klomp, & Wright-St Clair, 2005). While it is acknowledged that the deconstruction of occupation is useful for theoretical advancement and practice, it should not be mistaken to be a full reflection of the relationship between occupation and occupational choice. This verifies the standpoint that occupation (Whiteford, Townsend, & Hocking, 2000) and occupational choice cannot be condensed to a reductionist paradigm. This suggests that occupational choice cannot be readily explicated; it requires considered involvement with the enfolded nature of occupational choice and the multiple factors within the context that influence the young adolescents' occupational choices. This suggests that the coherence of the patterns of occupational choice itself may have to be considered from an analytical perspective which considers the appreciative contribution of all of the influencing factors. This may bring with it the opportunity to access or modify occupational choice not only through an individual's occupational engagement, but in a combined way with considering the contextual relevance and the overall patterns of occupational choice. This is supported by the view that personal agency is shaped by the influence of greater society as well as local context (Cassell, 1993). This may impact the interventions for a marginalised group such as young adolescents in Lavender Hill since it involves promoting occupational justice at all levels of society.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has described the factors within the context that shaped the young adolescents' occupational choices in Lavender Hill. It highlighted that these factors are inextricably linked to the enfolded and convoluted nature of occupational choice. The occupational and temporal quality informed by practical consciousness contributed to the enfolded nature of occupational choice. This in turn enriched the contextual

relevance and coherence of occupational choice. The insights gained into the nature and influences on occupational choice provided direction for changing occupational choices.

Acknowledging the influences on and nature of occupational choice, the following definition of occupational choice is proposed:

Occupational choice involves the selection of occupations, as co-constructed through an individual, group and community's transactional relationship with their context. The selection of an occupation is an unfolding process of differentiating between preferences for action as shaped by the context. The selection process may be deliberate, or informed by a practical sense that guides how people operate as social agents; it manifests in occupational performance and engagement.

This definition emphasises that occupational choices are not only individually constructed. It diverges with previous definitions offered by Pierce (2003b) and Kielhofner (2008c) which reflects that an individual personally constructs their occupations. Instead, the proposed definition confirms the possibility of a socio-cultural influence on occupational choice (Bonder, 2007). Moreover, it highlights that the contextual influence contributes to the actual construction and selection of occupations and in so doing supports a socially oriented interpretation thereof. Drawing on the work of Bourdieu (1977), it has recognised the role of practical sense as opposed to deliberate thought, guiding action. The appreciation of the way that commonly shared know-how shapes the selection of occupations surpasses previous occupational therapy conceptualisations of the rational, deliberate process (Kielhofner, 2008f; Minato and Zemke, 2004) of occupational choice. Lastly, the restrictive influence of the context of Lavender Hill on occupational choice has challenged Kirsch's proposition (Polatajko et al., 2007b) that the right and power to exert choices often exists. Instead it provides evidence that the processes of making occupational choices may be restricted by the opportunities available in the context. The discussion explained that choices were made from within a narrow range of accessible opportunities and that the young adolescents' occupational choices perpetuated the prevailing occupational injustices.

# Summary, Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

## 6.1 Summary

This critical ethnography explored the occupational choices of a group of young adolescents living in Lavender Hill. Preparation for entry into this study involved conducting an ethnography and Youth Risk Behaviour Survey with young adolescents in Lavender Hill. This was followed by data generation which included three processes, namely, *Encouraging participants' voices in order to reveal their perspectives; Identifying different perspectives and Constructing meaning*. I conducted photo-elicitation interviews, applied photovoice methods and engaged in participant observation with seven participants. Significant adults in their lives participated in an interview as well. The data was transcribed verbatim and the photos were developed and discussed with the participants. Analysis of the data entailed a reconstructive and pragmatic horizon analysis with the full data set. The theme of the study was revealed as *Is net so* (It's just like that). This theme described the factors that sustained the hegemony associated with the young adolescent's occupational choices. The categories, *Ek en my tjommies* (My friends and I) and *Wies wys* (Be sussed) described the operating mechanisms influencing the young adolescents' occupational choices. This discussion highlighted that central to maintaining the hegemony was the implicit relationship between the context and the nature of the young adolescents' occupational choices. This was illustrated in the enfolded nature of occupational choice as consisting of occupational, temporal, and implicitly practical conscious mechanisms of making occupational choices. This enfolded nature of occupational choice was impacted upon

by the young adolescents' experiences of the historically predicated patterns of occupations at a community level, low educational expectations, the established subcultures and subgroups and the competition for symbolic status. These contextual factors were also preserved by the enfolded nature of the young adolescents' occupational choices. The reciprocal relationship between the enfolded nature of occupational choice and the contextual factors emerged as key to the convoluted nature of occupational choice. Appreciating the enfolded and convoluted nature of occupational choice together with the prevailing connection with the contextual features, suggestions were made for practice in occupational therapy and for conceptualisation of occupational choice in occupational science.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

This critical ethnographic study was conducted within the context of Lavender Hill. The factors within the context, the patterns and the nature of occupational choices described in this study, may have been unique to young adolescents in Lavender Hill. The qualitative and context-bound nature of the study requires that careful consideration and care is taken in the extrapolation of the findings to elsewhere. Nonetheless, the study offered some insights into occupational choice that may be valuable. The following section describes what may be learnt by appreciating the above perspectives on occupational choice. It advocates that occupational choice is not just an individual construct. That it is reflective of and influenced by the context and patterns of occupational choice at an individual, group and societal level warrants attention. Added to this, the benefit of paying attention to the nature of occupational choice as influential in shaping further choices is advanced.

Occupational choice emerged as a construct of relevance to the promotion of occupational justice, to the development of knowledge in occupational science and to the practice of occupational therapy. Recommendations related to the associated usefulness of occupational choice to each of these are described in an integrated manner below.

The call to simultaneously consider the contextual influences together with the nature of occupational choice offers a perspective with which to begin to facilitate changes in future choices and subsequently occupational engagement. Multiple factors



within the context influenced the enfolded and convoluted nature of occupational choice. The connection between the nature of and influences on occupational choice as described in the theme, *Is net so* (It's just like that) showed that patterns of occupational choice were paralleled at individual, group and community levels. These patterns could be explicated by examining the contextual factors. This study identified how the specific context influenced school-going young adolescents, however, given the high dropout rate in Lavender Hill, many young adolescents may not be attending school. To investigate this groups' occupational choices, occupational therapists practising in Lavender Hill could explore the patterns of occupational choices by examining the context of these choices. This approach recognises the collective influence of the factors within the context. It would add potency to practice by allowing for the examination of the power and other structures which shape the way that occupational choices are made.

The coexistence and codependence of patterns across the individual, group and societal levels was shown to be central to the nature of occupational choice. This was especially significant for young adolescents as part of a post-apartheid society. It not only connected their present occupational choices with their collective histories, but also held potential consequences for what their futures might involve. For example, young adolescents perpetuating occupational choices in Lavender Hill may be less inclined to pursue secondary or even tertiary educational qualifications and thus may only access a restricted range of work. Based on this research study, it is assumed that giving attention to a pattern such as that of inaccessible secondary or tertiary education may influence possible occupational choices in the future. An occupational therapist may create opportunities for young adolescents to identify their limited mindsets regarding educational achievement and provide them with positive educational experiences which promote achievement. One such positive experience may be the opportunity to reflect on the history associated with the forms of dance which they commonly perform. In so doing, there would be opportunity for them to showcase their talents and begin to seek theoretical applications related to their experiences. This would begin to break with the normative expectations such as, that they have little to contribute in the formal educational arena. Educators could collaborate with the occupational therapist so that the view of low educational expectations can be challenged and further opportunities created. This possibility holds potential for

interventions that promote equitable occupational engagement in that attention can be given to diverse capabilities and occupations. Facilitating an appreciation for diverse capabilities within the education setting would be a strategy for challenging the existing power structures. Related to this was that the normative social processes associated with commonly occurring occupational repertoires impacted on the participants' occupational choices. This would suggest that synchronous consideration should be given to the occupational patterns at individual, group and community levels in order to identify approaches to practice that assist youth in making occupational choices that serve a democratic South Africa. The findings of the study identified parents, significant others, adults in the community, peers and educators as key stakeholders contributing to young adolescents' occupational choices. This study however only sought the opinion of one significant adult in a limited manner. It is asserted that working directly with these stakeholders, perhaps even aiming to bring about changes in their occupations could have positive impacts for young adolescents. This would be consistent with the intentions of occupational justice. It is further advocated that it may be of value to incorporate this perspective into occupational therapy education.

Adopting a view that fully appreciates the convoluted nature of occupational choice requires that occupational therapy education allows students to gain insight into the composite relationships defining the nature of and influencing factors on occupational choice. Occupational therapy practice learning curricula should provide the opportunity for students to gain skills in the assessment and analysis of the patterns of occupational choices that targeted individuals and groups engage in. This analysis would focus not only on the individual's account, but has to involve robust consideration of the contextual factors that may influence the patterns. This concurrent consideration would allow the complexity of occupational choice to be perceived. It is proposed that the outcome of the analysis should be contrasted with what may have been possible if the contextual circumstances or patterns of individuals' occupational choices were different. The discrepancy between the actual and potential patterns would show the opportunities to facilitate change in occupational choice, while acknowledging the presence of various forms of power. The divergence between the reality and potential may offer possibilities for bringing about change. In this study it was highlighted that enriching young adolescents' occupational repertoires may require more than introducing a range of opportunities for occupational engagement. It showed that the

convoluted nature of young adolescents' occupational choices has to be mediated. This mediation seemed to require critical thinking about how the introduced occupations interface with the current patterns of occupational choices within the context. For young adolescents living in Lavender Hill the mediation of the occupational choices seemed to call for facilitation of occupational choices in a way that gave due consideration to the young adolescents' current occupational engagement and the way that power was experienced in the context.

Due consideration to the young adolescents experience of power relations and multiple views on their occupational engagement could be successfully negotiated by gaining insights into the influencing factors from the perspectives of various stakeholders. In Lavender Hill, young adolescents, their peers, members' of relevant subcultures, educators, parents and adults in the community could be consulted. While it may not be possible always to gain the opinion of all these stakeholders, it is nonetheless important at least to consult influential members so that incisive change in occupational choices may be facilitated. The way that this may be negotiated is through a collaborative, participative approach.

Furthermore, deliberation about the social positions held by students and relevant stakeholders would have to occur. A key component would be to develop students' skills in interpreting their knowledge gained about the patterns of occupational choice together with their understanding of their social positions. It is advocated that occupational therapists and students should complete an intersectional analysis of their own and young adolescents' positionality within the practice setting. An intersectional analysis involves examining concrete experiences and positions in terms of a multiplicity of identities and associated social experiences (Yuwal-Davis, 2006). Applied to practice in Lavender Hill, the student or therapist would be tasked with identifying the power associated with different aspects of their identity and their positions within the social hierarchy of the context. They would compare this analysis with a similar analysis completed for the young adolescents who they work with. It is suggested that this analysis offers insight into the power relations within and between occupational therapists or students and the young adolescents. Awareness of the power relations will inform the way that intervention is designed to promote occupational justice. It is expected that the forms of power will influence the kinds of occupations that young adolescents may have access to. Given the importance of social class and history to the

contextual influence of occupational choice, the understanding of personal social positions is deemed essential. For example, an analysis of social positions would assist white, middle class students entering into a context like Lavender Hill in that they would have the opportunity to appreciate how they would be perceived given the privilege historically associated with whiteness. Understanding the history of their social positions may also assist with insight into the differences and similarities in interpretation of occupations between themselves and young adolescents in Lavender Hill. Drawing on their understanding and exploring how they could use the power and knowledge of their positions would allow students to be resourceful by optimally using their social positions in ways that benefit the groups that they may work with. While students may benefit from this perspective, occupational therapists practising in partnership with communities may also benefit from applying this. A more prolonged period of time to engage and understand may permit the addition of more depth to interventions. It is suggested that the composite approach described above may facilitate an evolution of occupational engagement. This calls on reasoning beyond the traditional clinical reasoning associated with occupational therapy.

Implementation of a participatory approach while generating opportunities for occupational engagement may create the opening for noticing the instinctual sense associated with occupational choices. It is suggested that this may allow the nature of occupational choice to emerge, opening it for further analysis. The study also established that young adolescents living in Lavender Hill seemed to implicitly and vicariously follow predicated patterns of occupations. Granted that this prevailed, it is advocated that opportunities to engage should be complemented by opportunities to make their choices more explicit. It is anticipated that facilitating occupational engagement at the same time as learning about occupational choice may allow for the intricate details of the influences on occupational choice to be addressed. This implies that opportunities for occupational engagement should be supplemented with critical dialogue that allows young adolescents to inspect the assumptions that inform their occupational choices. The ladder of inference (Argyris, 1993; Colaborative ChangeWorks, 2005) may be a useful tool to guide the occupational therapists' thinking in this regard. It is suggested that this tool together with dialogue (Bohm, 2006; Colaborative ChangeWorks, 2005) may be powerful in promoting reflexive modes that may allow for more explicit conversations around the nature of occupational choices.

Also, given the co-construction of occupations and culture, it may be useful to explore opportunities, especially within peer groups to promote a broader range of occupational choices. This could be facilitated through creating expectations of and dialoguing about occupational engagement diverse from the existing patterns.

This study also suggested that some of the young adolescents' dispositions and social practices remained consistent with those which were prevalent during apartheid. Their education appeared to have limited influence on breaking their occupational engagement patterns from the ways of being and thinking that was associated with apartheid. Upon reflection, it raises questions about the way that education curricula are used to address issues of everyday living. This brings opportunity for change for professionals working in schools with institutional cultures as described in this study. The life orientation curriculum is one avenue that lends itself to guiding learners for life and its possibilities. It is suggested that an additional outcome of the life orientation curricula should be to enable young adolescents to participate in a diverse range of occupations through making diverse occupational choices. The sessions associated with this outcome may be facilitated in ways that promote a diverse range of patterns of occupational choices. While creating opportunity to discuss and engage with the occupational choices related to the full range of young adolescents' identities, the curriculum could offer the opportunity for exploration beyond expected identity positions. It may be that these lessons create opportunities to test the participation of occupations so that the young adolescents can move forward to make different occupational choices. This is particularly so knowing that young adolescents eagerly took any opportunity to test if they could access a probable occupational choice. Being able to test their participation within the safe space created for them to test their participation may allow young adolescents to re-imagine themselves engaging in diverse patterns of occupations. Facilitating sessions like these cannot be done while ignoring the educator's and school's perspectives. This is particularly important given that the current study showed that adults should give attention to mechanisms to enable young adolescents to access diverse outcomes. Rather, following in the participatory methodology suggested earlier, it is envisaged that young adolescents, community members, educators and school managers should collaborate in the above efforts. An example of a campaign might be a "Bazaar of occupations". Groups of peers could be invited to sign up for a few (perhaps three) occupations which they are

attracted to, but have not tried, over a six week period. The occupational therapist together with educators and community members could introduce a range of available occupations within the community. Groups of peers would then experience an occupation and then engage in a dialogue, reflecting on their experience of the occupational choice and the assumptions that they have related to it. This would create the platform for deliberate planning of occupational choices that could eventually form part of people in the community's habitus and thus their practical familiarity with an occupation. Introducing participation in occupations which are less commonly associated with Lavender Hill in manner which is sensitive to the context may result in diverse occupations appearing more accessible. This perception could then influence young adolescents to engage in initially less familiar occupations.

By explicating the nature of and influences on occupational choice, this study has advanced knowledge about the construct of occupational choice. It has contributed by articulating a definition of occupational choice which can be further researched and debated. The findings of this study have provided evidence for the assumptions that occupational choice has subjective and contextual dimensions; that it shapes occupations. It has extended the conceptualization of the relationship between occupational choice and the context. Also the relationship between occupational choice and occupational engagement, rather than only with occupational performance is noteworthy. Added to this, the perpetuation of hegemonic patterns of occupational choice adds to the notion of the cultural continuity of occupational choice. The way that occupational choice contributed to the perpetuation of patterns of occupational choice emphasised that occupational choice contributes to habitual patterns. The occupational choices of young adolescents have been shown to be consistent and reflect the patterns of occupational choice of groups and of the community. This adds a broader perspective to the interpretation of occupational choice and identifies occupational choice as a conduit for habitus. This could be further examined to investigate if or how it may apply to different population groups and in different contexts. Associated with this was that an occupational choice could be made implicitly; explicitly; spontaneously or with planning. Occupational choice making could also be engaged in as an occupation. These insights into occupational choice are beneficial to theoretically delineating the construct of occupational choice.

The intention of this study was to gain awareness into the nature and influences on young adolescents' occupational choices. It demonstrated that this insight into young adolescents' occupational choices could be gained from their perspectives. Especially perturbing was that fifteen years into post-apartheid South African society, young adolescents living in Lavender Hill still made occupational choices that were consistent with patterns during apartheid. This was embodied in the theme *Is net so* (It's just like that). Their hegemonic patterns of occupational choices were profoundly influenced by factors within the context. Structures, including subgroups and institutions within the context reinforced the status quo. Further to this, the inextricable relationship between the context and the nature of occupational choice contributed to the patterns of occupational engagement that emerged. Occupational choice was critical in mediating occupational engagement so as to maintain the homogeneity. This drew attention to the potential value of addressing this seemingly dormant, obscured construct. It is envisaged that this would contribute to enabling young adolescents to develop their capacities to conquer the hegemonic patterns of their occupational choices, further liberating them as South African citizens.

### 6.3 Recommendations for further research

- a) Identifying the perspectives on occupational choice of diverse groups of stakeholders, such as parents and teachers in Lavender Hill or similar communities, should be studied in order to understand these more fully. It is suggested that further evidence and insight into the occupational choices of these groups would provide the opportunity to contrast the opportunities and barriers to occupational choice experienced by each. This would offer insight into the relationship between occupational choice and occupational justice.
- b) Conducting case study research that details the long-term consequences of young adolescents' occupational choices. The current study highlighted the historically predicated nature of young adolescents' occupational choices. It is advocated that tracking the life trajectories of young adolescents' occupational choices would allow one to examine possible points at which change may be facilitated. Recognising where change may be possible, may then inform the precision of intervention.

- c) Research on scholarly practice that mediates occupational choices. Interventions which promote occupational justice are new in the field of occupational therapy. It was proposed that practice could be enhanced through assessment drawing on intersectional analysis and an analysis of patterns of occupational choice at various levels. An intervention applying these recommendations, together with participatory modes of practice and drawing from organisational learning needs to be investigated. This could be achieved through action research. In this way practice to promote occupational justice would be enhanced.
- d) Exploring the nature and context of occupational choices amongst diverse groups of young adolescents. This exploration would allow one to test the appropriateness of the proposed definition of occupational choice more broadly.



# Youth Risk Behaviour Survey

## INTRODUCTION

This survey contains a list of questions and possible answers. I will ask you the question and you must choose the answer that best fits what you know or do. You will have to choose only one answer for every question. The answers will be displayed on these cards.

Remember that

- this is not a test
- there is no right or wrong answer
- no teachers/parents/ guardians will see your answer
- your name will not be written down anywhere.

### Section A: Some information about yourself

- 1. Are you a boy (man) or a girl (woman)?**
  - a. boy (man)
  - b. girl (woman)
- 2. In what grade are you?**
  - a. Grade 6
  - b. Grade 7
- 3. What is your race group?**
  - a. Black
  - b. Coloured
  - c. Indian
  - d. White
  - e. Other

- 4. During the past 6 months, how would you describe your grades in school?**
  - a. Mostly A's (80% or more)
  - b. Mostly B's (70% - 79%)
  - c. Mostly C's (60% - 69%)
  - d. Mostly D's (50% - 59%)
  - e. Mostly E's (40% - 49%)
  - f. I don't know
  
- 5. In the past 6 months, what one type of book have you read the most? (do not count the text books given to you by your school / teacher)?**
  - a. I have not read any other books
  - b. I have read novels / story books
  - c. I have read comics
  - d. I have read magazines
  - e. I have read other types of books not mentioned above
  
- 6. In a normal / usual month (30 days), how much spending money do you get?**
  - a. I don't get any spending money
  - b. Less than R5.00
  - c. From R5.00 to R10.00
  - d. From R11.00 to R20.00
  - e. From R21.00 to R30.00
  - f. From R31.00 to R40.00
  - g. From R41.00 to R50.00
  - h. More than R50.00
  
- 7. Does your father have a paid job? (paid job also refers to those who are self-employed e.g. your father has a shop at home)**
  - a. Yes, works 5 or more days a week
  - b. Yes, works less than 5 days a week
  - c. No, is unemployed
  - d. No, is ill or disabled
  - e. No, has retired
  - f. I don't have a father (or male guardian) / my father is dead
  - g. I don't know

- 8. Does your mother have a paid job? (paid job also refers to those who are self-employed e.g. your mother has a shop at home)**
- a. Yes, works 5 or more days a week
  - b. Yes, works less than 5 days a week
  - c. No, is a housewife
  - d. No, is unemployed
  - e. No, is ill or disabled
  - f. No, has retired
  - g. I don't have a mother (or female guardian) / my mother is dead
  - h. I don't know

**Section B: The following questions are about your personal safety.**

- 9. How often do you use a seat belt when you are in a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi) driven by someone else?**
- a. Always
  - b. Most of the time
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
  - f. I have never been in a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi)
- 10. How often do you use a seat belt when you yourself drive a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi or bus)?**
- a. Always
  - b. Most of the time
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
  - f. I do not drive a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi or bus)
- 11. During the past month (30 days), how often were you in a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi or bus) driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 time)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)

- d. Often (4 or 5 times)
- e. Very often (6 or more times)
- f. I have never been in a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi or bus)
- g. I don't know if the person had been drinking alcohol

**12. During the past month (30 days), how often did you drive a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi or bus) when you yourself had been drinking alcohol?**

- a. Never (0 times)
- b. Rarely (1 time)
- c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)
- d. Often (4 or 5 times)
- e. Very often (6 or more times)
- f. I have never driven a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi or bus) when I have been drinking alcohol
- g. I do not drive a car or other vehicle (e.g. van, taxi or bus)

**13. During the past month (30 days), how often did you walk alongside a road when you had been drinking alcohol?**

- a. Never (0 times)
- b. Rarely (1 time)
- c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)
- d. Often (4 or 5 times)
- e. Very often (6 or more times)
- f. I have never walked alongside a road after I had been drinking alcohol
- g. I don't drink alcohol

**Section C: The following questions are about violence-related behaviour.**

**14. During the past month (30 days), how often did you carry a weapon such as a gun, knife, panga or kirie?**

- a. Never (0 days)
- b. Rarely (1 day)
- c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
- d. Often (4 or 5 days)
- e. Very often (6 or more days)

- 15. During the past month (30 days), how often did you carry a gun?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 day)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - e. Very often (6 or more days)
- 16. During the past month (30 days), how often did you carry a knife?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 day)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - e. Very often (6 or more days)
- 17. During the past month (30 days), how often did you carry a such as a gun, knife, panga or kirie while at school?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 day)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - e. Very often (6 or more days)
- 18. During the past month (30 days), on how many days did you not go to school (miss school) because you felt you would be unsafe at school?**
- a. 0 days
  - b. 1 day
  - c. 2 or 3 days
  - d. 4 or 5 days
  - e. 6 or more days
- 19. During the past month (30 days), on how many days did you not go to school (miss school) because you felt you would be unsafe on your way to or from school?**
- a. 0 days
  - b. 1 day
  - c. 2 or 3 days
  - d. 4 or 5 days

- e. 6 or more days
- 20. During the past 6 months, how often has someone threatened or injured you with a weapon such as a gun, knife, panga or kirie at school?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 time)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 times)
  - e. Very often (6 or more times)
- 21. During the past 6 months, how often have you threatened or injured someone with a weapon such as a gun, knife, panga or kirie at school?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 time)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 times)
  - e. Very often (6 or more times)
- 22. During the past month, have you had to stop playing somewhere because you felt threatened by violence, such as physical fighting or shooting?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 day)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - e. Very often (6 or more days)
- 23. During the past month (30 days), what was the one way in which you were bullied the most? (Select only one response)**
- a. I was never bullied
  - b. I was called mean names, was made fun of, or was teased in a hurtful way
  - c. I was hit, kicked, pushed, shoved around or locked indoors
  - d. Others told lies or spread false rumours about me and tried to make people dislike me
  - e. I was made fun of because of my race or colour
  - f. I was made fun of because of my religion
  - g. Others made sexual jokes, comments or signs to me
  - h. I was bullied in some other way

24. During the past 6 months, how often were you in a physical fight (e.g. punching, hitting)?
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 time)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 times)
  - e. Very often (6 or more times)
25. During the past 6 months, how often were you in a physical fight (e.g. punching, hitting) in which you were injured and had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 time)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 times)
  - e. Very often (6 or more times)
26. During the past 6 months, how often were you in a physical fight (e.g. punching, hitting) at school?
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 time)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 times)
  - d. Often (4 or 5 times)
  - e. Very often (6 or more times)
27. During the past 6 months, have you ever been a member of a gang?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
28. During the past 6 months, did your boyfriend or girlfriend ever hit, smack (slap), or physically hurt you on purpose?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
29. During the past 6 months, did you ever hit, smack (slap), or physically hurt your boyfriend or girlfriend on purpose?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

- 30. Have you ever been physically forced to have sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus) when you did not want to?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No
- 31. Have you ever physically forced someone to have sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus) when he/she did not want to?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No

**Section D: The following questions are about sad feelings and attempts at suicide.**

Sometimes people feel so depressed about the future that they may consider attempting suicide, that is, taking some action to end their own life.

- 32. During the past 6 months, have you ever felt so sad or hopeless that you stopped doing some usual activities for two weeks or more in a row?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I don't know
- 33. During the past 6 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide (that is take some action to end your life)?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No
- 34. During the past 6 months, did you make a plan about how you would attempt suicide (that is take some action to end your life)?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I have never thought of attempting suicide
- 34. During the past 6 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide (that is take some action to end your life)?**
- a. 0 times
  - b. 1 time
  - c. 2 or 3 times
  - d. 4 or 5 times



e. 6 or more times

- 35. If you attempted suicide during the past 6 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?**
- a. I did not attempt suicide (that is take some action to end my life) during the past 6 months
  - b. Yes
  - c. No
- 36. If you have concerns o difficulties, have you thought about approaching an adult for assistance?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I have never thought of approaching an adult
  - d. I did not have an adult who I could approach
- 37. If you have concerns o difficulties, have you ever actually approached an adult**
- a. Yes
  - b. No

**Section E: The following questions are about smoking.**

- 38. During the past month (30 days), on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?**
- a. 0 days
  - b. 1 or 2 days
  - c. 3 to 5 days
  - d. 6 to 9 days
  - e. 10 to 19 days
  - f. 20 to 29 days
  - g. All 30 days
- 39. During the past month (30 days), have you ever smoked any form of tobacco products other than cigarettes (e.g. cigars, little cigars, pipe)?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No

- 40. During the past month (30 days), have you ever used any form of smokeless tobacco products (e.g. chewing tobacco, snuff)?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No
- 41. How old were you when you first tried a cigarette?**
- a. I have never smoked cigarettes
  - b. 7 years old or younger
  - c. 8 or 9 years old
  - d. 10 or 11 years old
  - e. 12 or 13 years old
- 42. During the past year, have you ever tried to stop smoking?**
- a. I have never smoked
  - b. I did not smoke during the past year
  - c. Yes, I tried to stop smoking
  - d. No, I did not try to stop smoking
- 43. During the past week (7 days), on how many days have people smoked in your presence?**
- a. 0 days
  - b. 1 to 2 days
  - c. 3 to 4 days
  - d. 5 to 6 days
  - e. 7 days
- 44. Do your parents / guardians smoke?**
- a. Both my parents / guardians do not smoke
  - b. Both my parents / guardians smoke
  - c. Only my father / male guardian smokes
  - d. Only my mother / female guardian smokes
  - e. I don't know

**Section F: The following questions are about drinking alcohol.**

This includes drinking beer, cider, wine, home brew and spirits such as brandy, gin, vodka, or whiskey. For these questions, drinking alcohol does not include drinking a few sips of wine for religious purposes.

- 45. During your life, how often have you had at least one drink of alcohol (e.g. a beer, a glass of wine, or a 'tot' of brandy)?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 days)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 days)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 days)
  - e. Very often (20 or more days)
- 46. How old were you when you had your first drink of alcohol (e.g. a beer, a glass of wine, or a 'tot' of brandy) other than a few sips?**
- a. I have never had a drink of alcohol
  - b. I have only had a few sips of alcohol
  - c. 8 years old or younger
  - d. 9 - 10 years old
  - e. 11 - 12 years old
  - f. 13 - 14 years old
  - g. 15 - 17 years old
  - h. 18 years old or older
- 47. During the past month (30 days), how often did you have at least one drink of alcohol (e.g. a beer, a glass of wine, or a 'tot' of brandy)?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 to 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (6 to 9 days)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 days)
  - e. Very often (20 to 30 days)
- 48. During the past month (30 days), how often did you have 5 or more drinks of alcohol (e.g. a beer, a glass of wine, or a 'tot' of brandy) in a row, that is, within a couple of hours?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 to 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (6 to 9 days)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 days)
  - e. Very often (20 to 30 days)

- 49. During the past month (30 days), how often did you have at least one drink of alcohol (e.g. a beer, a glass of wine, or a 'tot' of brandy) at school during school time?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 to 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (6 to 9 days)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 days)
  - e. Very often (20 to 30 days)

**Section G: The following questions are about dagga / hashish (marijuana) use.  
Dagga / hashish (marijuana) is also called zol or ganja.**

- 50. During your life, how often have you used dagga / hashish (marijuana)?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very often (20 or more times)
- 51. How old were you when you tried dagga / hashish (marijuana) for the first time?**
- a. I have never tried dagga / hashish (marijuana)
  - b. 8 years old or younger
  - c. 9 or 10 years old
  - d. 11 or 12 years old
  - e. 13 or 14 years old
  - f. 15 or 16 years old
  - g. 17 years old or older
- 52. During the past month (30 days), how often did you use dagga / hashish (marijuana)?**
- Never (0 days)
- a. Rarely (1 to 5 days)
  - b. Sometimes (6 to 9 days)
  - c. Often (10 to 19 days)
  - d. Very often (20 to 30 days)

- 53. During the past month (30 days), how often did you use dagga / hashish (marijuana) at school during school time?**
- a. Never (0 days)
  - b. Rarely (1 to 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (6 to 9 days)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 days)
  - e. Very often (20 to 30 days)

**Section H: The following questions are about drug use.**

- 54. During your life, how often have you sniffed glue, breathed the contents of aerosol spray cans, or inhaled any paint thinners, petrol or benzine to get high?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very Often (20 or more times)
  - f. I don't know this drug
- 55. During your life, how often have you used mandrax (also called buttons, white pipe)?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very Often (20 or more times)
  - f. I don't know this drug
- 56. During your life, how often have you used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or rocks?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very Often (20 or more times)
  - f. I don't know this drug

- 57. During your life, how often have you used heroin (also called horse, brown sugar, or white Thai)?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very Often (20 or more times)
  - f. I don't know this drug
- 58. During your life, how often have you used a needle to inject any illegal drug into your body?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very Often (20 or more times)
- 59. During your life, how often have you used any other illegal drugs not mentioned above such as ecstasy, LSD, speed, magic mushrooms?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very Often (20 or more times)
  - f. I don't know these drugs
- 60. During your life, how often have you used over-the-counter or prescription drugs (including pain killers, cough mixtures and diet pills) to get high?**
- a. Never (0 times)
  - b. Rarely (1 or 2 times)
  - c. Sometimes (3 to 9 times)
  - d. Often (10 to 19 times)
  - e. Very Often (20 or more times)
  - f. I don't know this drug

**61. During the past 6 months, has anyone offered, sold, or given you an illegal drug at school?**

a. Yes

b. No

**Section I: The following questions are about your sexual behaviour.**

**62. Have you ever had sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus)?**

a. Yes

b. No

**63. How old were you when you had sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus) for the first time?**

a. I have never had sex

b. 11 years old or younger

c. 12 or 13 years old

d. 14 or 15 years old

e. 16 years old

f. 17 years old or older

**64. During your life, with how many people have you had sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus)?**

a. I have never had sex

b. 1 person

c. 2 people

d. 3 or more people

**65. During the past 3 months, with how many people did you have sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus)?**

a. I have never had sex

b. I have had sex, but not during the past 3 months

c. 1 person

d. 2 people

e. 3 or more people

- 66. The last time you had sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus), did you drink alcohol or use drugs (e.g. mandrax, dagga, ecstasy) before you had sex?**
- a. I have never had sex
  - b. Yes
  - c. No
  - d. I do not remember
- 67. When you have sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus), how often do you or your partner use a condom?**
- a. I have never had sex
  - b. We never use a condom
  - c. We rarely use a condom
  - d. We sometimes use a condom
  - e. We use a condom most of the time
  - f. We always use a condom
- 68. When you have sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus), what one method did you or your partner mostly use to prevent pregnancy? (SELECT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)**
- a. I have never had sex
  - b. No method was used to prevent pregnancy
  - c. Birth control pills
  - d. Condoms
  - e. Injection (e.g. Depo-Provera)
  - f. Withdrawal (penis removed from the vagina before ejaculation)
  - g. Morning after pill
  - h. Some other method
- 69. If you are a girl, have you ever been pregnant or if you are a boy, have you ever made someone pregnant?**
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I don't know if my partner was pregnant
- 70. Have you or your partner ever had an abortion?**
- a. Yes



- b. No
- c. I don't know if my partner had an abortion
- d. I/ my partner has never been pregnant
- e. I have never had sex

**71. If you or your partner had an abortion, where did the abortion take place?**

- a. In a hospital / clinic
- b. At a traditional doctor / healer
- c. In another place
- d. I don't know where the abortion took place
- e. I don't know if my partner had an abortion
- f. I/ my partner has never been pregnant
- g. I have never had sex

**72. Have you ever had a sexually transmitted disease (std e.g. 'idrop', discharge)?**

- a. I have never had sex
- b. No, I have never had a sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- c. Yes, I have had a sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- d. I don't know

**73. If you had a sexually transmitted disease (STD), did you have treatment?**

- a. I have never had sex
- b. No, I did not have a sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- c. Yes, I had treatment for a sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- d. No, I did not have treatment for a sexually transmitted disease (STD)

**74. Do you think that you could get the HIV infection in your lifetime?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

**75. Do you think that you are able to protect yourself from getting the HIV infection?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

**76. Have you ever been taught in class about the HIV infection and/or AIDS?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**Section J: The following questions are about your body weight.**

**75. How would you describe your weight?**

- a. Very underweight (very thin)
- b. Slightly underweight (thin)
- c. About the right weight
- d. Slightly overweight (fat)
- e. Very overweight (very fat)
- f. I don't know

**76. Which of the following are you trying to do about your weight?**

- a. Lose weight
- b. Gain weight
- c. Stay the same weight
- d. I am not trying to do anything about my weight

**77. During the past month (30 days), which one of the following did you do the most to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight? (Select only one response)**

- a. Exercise
- b. Eat less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat
- c. Go without eating for 24 hours or more (also called fasting)
- d. Take any diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor's advice
- e. Vomit
- f. Take laxatives
- g. None of the above

**Section K: The following questions ask about food you ate or drank during the past 7 days. Think about all the meals and snacks you had from the time you got up until you went to bed. Be sure to include food you ate at home, at school, at restaurants, or anywhere else.**

**78. During the past week (7 days), how often did you eat fresh fruit?**

- a. Very often (6 or 7 days)

- b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)
- 79. During the past week (7 days), how often did you eat fresh vegetables that have been cooked or were in a salad?**
- a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)
- 80. During the past week (7 days), how often did you drink milk / 'amasi'? (Include the milk you drank in a glass or cup, from a carton, or with cereal / porridge.)**
- a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)
- 81. During the past week (7 days), how often did you eat fast foods or 'luxuries' like a hamburger, fried chicken, boerewors roll, hotdog, hot chips, 'gatsby', pies, vetkoek or polony roll?**
- a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)
- 82. During the past week (7 days), how often did you eat a cake and / or biscuits?**
- a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)

- e. Never (0 days)
- 83. During the past week (7 days), how often did you eat chocolate, sweets or drink cooldrinks like coca-cola ('coke')?**
  - a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)
- 84. During the past week (7 days), how often did you eat meat?**
  - a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)
- 85. During the past week (7 days), how often did you eat maize (in any form e.g. pap, porridge)?**
  - a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)
- 86. During the past week (7 days), how often did you go to sleep feeling hungry because there was not enough food to eat in your house?**
  - a. Very often (6 or 7 days)
  - b. Often (4 or 5 days)
  - c. Sometimes (2 or 3 days)
  - d. Rarely (1 day)
  - e. Never (0 days)

**Section L: The following questions ask about physical activity.**

- 87. In the past week (7 days), how often did you exercise or participate in physical activity for at least 20 minutes, such as soccer, netball, rugby, basketball or running?**
- a. I did not take part in physical activity in the past week (7 days)
  - b. 1 day
  - c. 2 days
  - d. 3 days
  - e. 4 days
  - f. 5 days
  - g. 6 days
  - h. Every day
- 88. In the past week (7 days), what was the main reason for you not to take part in physical activity? (select only one response)**
- a. I took part in physical activity in the past week (7 days)
  - b. I did not want to take part in physical activity in the past week (7 days)
  - c. I was ill
  - d. I felt unsafe, frightened and/or scared to go out to the ground / gym to take part in physical activity
  - e. I do not have the equipment / ground / gym to take part in physical activity
  - f. I don't know
- 89. In the past week (7 days), how often did you participate in physical activity for at least 30 minutes, such as fast walking, slow bicycling, skating, pushing a lawn mower, mopping, polishing or sweeping the floors?**
- a. I did not take part in physical activity in the past week (7 days)
  - b. 1 day
  - c. 2 days
  - d. 3 days
  - e. 4 days
  - f. 5 days
  - g. 6 days
  - h. Every day

- 90. On an average school day, how much time do you spend watching TV, playing video games or computer games?**
- a. I do not watch TV, play video games or computer games on an average school day
  - b. Less than 1 hour per day
  - c. 1 hour per day
  - d. 2 hours per day
  - e. 3 hours per day
  - f. 4 hours per day
  - g. 5 or more hours per day
  - h. I do not have access to a TV, video games or computer games
- 91. In an average week when you are in school, on how many days do you have physical education (PE) classes or 'sport' on your school timetable?**
- a. We do not have physical education (PE) classes or 'sport' on our school timetable
  - b. 1 day
  - c. 2 days
  - d. 3 days
  - e. 4 days
  - f. Every day
- 92. During an average physical education (pe) class or 'sport' class, which one of the following activities do you mainly do? (select only one response)**
- a. We do not have physical education classes or 'sport'
  - b. soccer
  - c. running
  - d. rugby
  - e. netball / basketball
  - f. cricket
  - g. life-skills education or class discussion
  - h. other activities

**That was the last question!!! Thank you for filling in the questionnaire.**

## APPENDIX TWO

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### Letter of ethics approval from UCT and Western Cape Education Department



Research Ethics Committee  
ES3 Room 44.1, Old Main Building Groote  
Schaar Hospital, Observatory, 7925  
Queries : Xolile Fula  
Tel : (021) 406-6492 Fax: 406-6411  
E-mail : Xfula@curie.uct.ac.za

20 August 2004

REC REF: 278/2004

Ms R Galvaan  
Health & Rehabilitation Sciences

Dear Ms Galvaan

THE DETERMINANTS OF YOUNG ADOLESCENTS OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES IN POST APARTHEID  
SOUTH AFRICA

*Thank you for submitting your study to the Research Ethics Committee for  
review.*

*It is a pleasure to inform you that the Ethics Committee has formally approved  
the above-mentioned on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2004.*

Please quote the REC. REF in all your correspondence

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. ZABOW'.

PROF. T. ZABOW  
CHAIRPERSON

Navrae  
Enquiries  
Imibuzo  
Telefoon  
Telephone  
Ifoni  
Faks  
Fax  
Ifekst  
Verwysing  
Reference  
Isafathiso

Dr RS Cornelissen

(021) 467-2286

(021) 425-7445

20040804-0019



Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni



Mrs Roshan Galvaan  
Department of Health and Rehab Sciences  
E45 Old Main Building  
Groote Schuur Hospital  
OBSERVATORY  
7925

Dear Mrs R. Galvaan

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL: DETERMINANTS OF YOUNG ADOLESCENTS OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES IN POST APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA.**

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from 16<sup>th</sup> August 2004 to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2004 and from 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005 to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005.
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December 2004).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the Principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the following schools: **Zerilda Park Primary, Levana Primary, Hillwood Primary and Prince George Primary.**
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:  
**The Director: Education Research  
Western Cape Education Department  
Private Bag X9114  
CAPE TOWN  
8000**

We wish you success in your research

Kind regards

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen  
for: HEAD: EDUCATION  
DATE: 04<sup>th</sup> August 2004

MILO ASSEMBLIEF VERWYSINGSNOMMERS IN ALLE KORRESPONDENSIE / PLEASE QUOTE REFERENCE NUMBERS IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE /  
NCEDA IIBALE IINOMBOLO ZESALATHISO KUYO YONKE IMBALELWANO

GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LAER-PARLEMENTSTRAAT, PRIVAATSAK X9114, KAAPSTAD 8000  
GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LOWER PARLIAMENT STREET, PRIVATE BAG X9114, CAPE TOWN 8000

WEB: <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>



## APPENDIX THREE

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### 3.1 Parent Information sheet for YRBS

#### 3.1.1 English

Dear Parent/Guardian

Roshan Galvaan, an occupational therapist at the University of Cape Town will be conducting a research project with children between the ages of ten and thirteen at Levana Primary, Hillwood Primary, Zerilda Park Primary and Prince George Primary school. She is registered to do a doctoral degree and this research will form part of her studies.

The purpose of the research is to learn about the activities that children between the ages of eleven and thirteen do every day and how this affects their health. Children have been selected to participate in the study by chance. All information that is gathered will remain confidential, this means that children's names will not be used and so their identity will not be known when the information is reported on. The information received from the learners will not be linked to them in any way.

Children will be asked to answer questions about the activities that they do and experiences that they have in their community. A UCT employed research assistant will be the person conducting the questionnaire. The children will not miss out on schoolwork, because the times for the interview will be negotiated with the class teacher. The information will be used in research report, academic and academic and popular publishing.

Children's' participation in the project is voluntary and both you and they have the right to refuse to join in or withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions about the research, feel free to contact

Roshan Galvaan at 406 6042.

Thanking you in anticipation

Roshan Galvaan

### **3.1.2 Afrikaans**

#### **Geagte Ouer/Voog**

Roshan Galvaan, 'n arbeidsterapeut, verbonde aan die Universiteit van Kaapstad, is besig met 'n ondersoek projek met kinders tussen die ouderdomme van elf en dertien by die volgende skole: Levana Primêr; Zerilda Park Primêr; Hillwood Primêr; Prince George Primêr.

Die doel van die ondersoek is om te bepaal watter aktiwiteite kinders elke dag doen en ook watter impak hierdie aktiwiteite op hul gesondheid het. Kinders is onwillekeurig gekies om deel te neem aan die projek. Inligting wat ingesamel word is vertroulik, wat beteken dat die kinders se name onder geen omstandighede gebruik sal word nie om hul identiteit te verseker. Die inligting wat van die leerders ontvang word sal geen impak hê teenoor hoe hulle opgetree sal word nie.

Daar sal van die kinders verwag word om 'n vraelys mondelings te beantwoord oor die aktiwiteite wat hulle doen. 'n Universiteit van Kaapstad navorser sal die vraelys behartig. Die kinders sal geen skoolwerk mis nie, aangesien die tye van die onderhoude met die klasonderwyser bespreek sal word. Die inligting sal gebruik word in 'n navorsings verslag, akademiese en bekende tydskrifte.

Die kinders se deelname aan die projek is vrywillig en beide die ouer en die kinders het die reg om teen enige tyd te weier of te ontrek aan die projek.

Indien u enige vrae het in verband met die navorsing, voel vry om my te kontak by:

Roshan Galvaan: 406 6042

**DANKIE VIR U SAMEWERKING**

Roshan Galvaan

### 3.2 Parent consent form for YRBS

#### 3.2.1 English

I, ....., the parent/guardian of . .... , hereby give permission for him/her to participate in the research study conducted by the University of Cape Town occupational therapist (Roshan Galvaan).

I have read the information sheet describing the study and agree to allow my son/daughter to participate in an interview about the activities that s/he does.

I am aware that the research has no bearing on my parenting and that I have the right to refuse consent.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

#### 3.2.2 Afrikaans

Ouer/Voeg Toestemming Form: Vraestel

Ek, ..... die ouer/voeg van ....., gee hiermee toestemming vir haar/hom om deel te neem aan die navorsingstudie wat deur die arbeidsterapeut, Roshan Galvaan, van die Universiteit van Kaapstad gereel word.

Ek is bekend met die inhoud wat die storie beskryf en gee toestemming dat my seun/dogter mag deelneem aan die aktiviteit en wat dit behels.

Ek is bewus dat my integriteit as ouer nie ter sprake is nie en dat ek die reg het om toestemming te weier.

Handtekening: .....

Datum .....

### **3.3 Learner information sheet for YRBS**

#### **3.3.1 English**

Dear Learner

Roshan Galvaan, an occupational therapist at the University of Cape Town will be conducting a research project with children between the ages of ten and thirteen at Levana Primary, Hillwood Primary, Zerilda Park Primary and Prince George Primary school.

The research is to learn about the activities that you do every day. You have been selected by chance. Your name will not be used in any reports, so no one will know what you say. The answers you give will not affect what happens to you at school in any way.

If you say yes, then a researcher will ask you questions about the activities that you do. Your teachers, parents or principal will not be told about your answers, unless you give permission.

You will not miss out on schoolwork, we will ask you and your class teacher when the best time will be to ensure this. Information will be used in a research report, and maybe in the newspaper or magazines.

Your contribution is voluntary and you have the right to refuse or withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions about the research, feel free to contact

Roshan Galvaan at 406 6042.

Thanking you in anticipation

Roshan Galvaan

### 3.3.2 Afrikaans

Leerling Inligtingstuk Blad: Vraestel

Geagte Leerling

Roshan Galvaan, 'n arbeidsterapeut, verbonde aan die Universiteit van Kaapstad, is besig met 'n ondersoek projek met kinders tussen die ouderdomme van 10 en 13, by die volgende skole: Levana Primêr; Zerilda Park Primêr; Hillwood Primêr; Prince George Primêr.

Die doel van die ondersoek is om te bepaal watter aktiwiteite jy doen elke dag. Jy was onwillekeurig gekies om deel te neem aan die projek. Jou naam sal nie in geen verslae gebruik word nie daarom sal niemand weet wat jy sê nie. Die antwoorde wat jy gee, sal geen impak vir jou by die skool het nie.

As jy ja sê, dan sal iemand van die Universiteit van Kaapstad jou vrae kom vra oor die aktiwiteite wat jy doen. Jou onderwyser, ouers or die skoolhoof sal geen van jou antwoorde weet, behalwe as jy toestemming gee.

Jy sal geen skoolwerk mis nie, want ons gaan jy and jou onderwyser vra wanneer die beste tyd is vir jou om te kom. Inligting wat jy ons gee, sal in 'n navorsing verslag gebruik word, en miskien in die tydskrif of koerante

Jou samewerking is vrywillig en jy het die reg om uit te trek teen enige stadium.

Indien jy enige vrae het in verband met die navorsing, voel vry om Roshan Galvaan te kontak op 406 6042.

Dankie vir u samewerking

Roshan Galvaan

### **3.4 Learner assent form for YRBS**

#### **3.4.1 English**

I, ....., hereby agree to join in a research study conducted by the University of Cape Town occupational therapist (Roshan Galvaan).

I have read the information sheet describing the study and agree to answer questions about the various activities I do.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to participate and can withdraw at any time that I feel the need to.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

#### **3.4.2 Afrikaans**

Hiermee gee ek, ..... toestemming om deel te wees van 'n navorsings studie wat deur die arbeidsterapeut, Roshan Galvaan, van die Universiteit van Kaapstad saamgestel is.

Ek het die inhoud bestudeer en stem in om vrae wat aan my gestel word oor aktiviteite te beantwoord.

Ek is bewus dat ek onder geen verpligting is om die navorsing te doen nie en dat ek op enige stadium mag onttrek.

Handtrekening .....

Datum .....

## APPENDIX FOUR

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### 4.1 Parent information sheet for critical ethnography

#### 4.1.1 English

Dear Parent/Guardian

Roshan Galvaan, an occupational therapist at the University of Cape Town is conducting a research project with children between the ages of eleven and thirteen at Levana Primary and Zerilda Park Primary school.

The purpose of the research is to learn as much as possible about the activities and choices that children between the ages of eleven and thirteen do every day. All information that is gathered is confidential, this means that children's names will not be used and so their identity will not be known when the information is used in reports. The information received from the learners will not have any impact on how they are treated or their schooling.

During the interview, children will be asked to speak about the activities that they do during a normal day. They will be given a disposable camera and asked to take photos of themselves doing any activities. These photos will help the researcher to better understand what the children describe during the interview. Lastly, children will be observed while engaging in an activity. The time and activity being observed will be agreed upon by yourself and the child.

Interviews will be audio-recorded so that no information is lost. If agreed upon and possible, the observation session will be video-recorded.

Children will not miss out on schoolwork, as the times for the interview will be negotiated with the class teacher. The times for observation will be similarly arranged or will be after school. The information will be used in research report, academic and popular publishing. The researcher is obliged to inform a social worker if any serious child physical abuse or incidences of sexual abuse are uncovered.

Children's' participation in the project is voluntary and both you and they have the right to refuse to join in or withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions about the research, feel free to contact Roshan Galvaan at 406 6042.

Thanking you in anticipation

Roshan Galvaan

## **4.2 Parent consent form to critical ethnography**

### **4.2.1 English**

I, ....., the parent/guardian of . .... , hereby give permission for him/her to participate in the research study conducted by the University of Cape Town occupational therapist, Roshan Galvaan.

I have read the information sheet describing the study and agree to allow my son/daughter to participate in an interview about and take photographs of the activities that s/he does.

I am aware that the research has no bearing on my parenting and that I have the right to refuse consent.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

### **4.2.2 Afrikaans**

Ek, ..... die ouer/voog van ..... gee hiermee my toestemming vir die navorsings studie wat deur Roshan Galvaan, 'n arbeidsterapeut van die Universiteit van Kaapstad gedoen sal word.

Ek het die inligting aangaande die projek deurgelees en gee my toestemming dat my seun/dogter kan deelneem aan die onderhoude en fotos kan neem met 'n kamera van die aktiwiteite waarin hulle deelneem.

Ek is bewus dat die navorsing niks te doen het met hoe ek my kind opvoed nie en date k die reg het om te weir om teoestemming te gee.

Handtekening .....

Datum .....



## 4.3 Parent consent to observation

### 4.3.1 English

I, ....., the parent/guardian of . .... , hereby give permission for him/her to be observed for the research study conducted by the University of Cape Town occupational therapist, Roshan Galvaan.

I have read the information sheet describing the study and agree to allow my son/daughter to participate in the observation of the activity that s/he does.

I am aware that the research has no bearing on my parenting and that I have the right to refuse consent.

Please tick:

I agree to having a camera used during the observation

I do not want my child to participate in the observation

I agree to participate in an interview related to my child's activity choices.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

### 4.3.2 Afrikaans

Toestemming van Ouers ten opsigte van observasie

Ek, ..... die ouer/voog van ..... gee hiermee my toestemming vir die navorsings studie wat deur Roshan Galvaan, 'n arbeidsterapeut van die Universiteit van Kaapstad gedoen sal word.

Ek het die inligting aangaande die projek deurgelees en gee my toestemming dat my seun/dogter kan deelneem aan die observasie van hul aktiviteite.

Ek is bewus dat die navorsing niks te doen het met hoe ek my kind opvoed nie en date k die reg het om te weir om teoestemming te gee.

Maak 'n kruisie:

Ek stem saam tot die observasie en die gebruik van 'n kamera

Ek stem nie saam dat my kind die observasie doen nie

Handtekening .....

Datum .....

## **4.4 Learner information sheet for critical ethnography**

### **4.4.1 English**

Dear Learner

Roshan Galvaan, an occupational therapist at the University of Cape Town is conducting a research project with children at Levana Primary and Zerilda Park Primary school.

She wants to know more about the activities that you do every day and also what choices of activities you make. Your name will not be used and so no one will be able to identify you when the information is used in reports.

You will be given a camera and asked to take photos of yourself doing any activities. You will be asked to speak about the activities that you do during the interview. Your photos will be spoken about during interviews. Lastly, the researcher will accompany you and watch while you are doing an activity of your choice.

Interviews will be tape-recorded so that no information is lost. If you agree, and if possible, photographs will also be taken at the observation session.

You will not miss out on schoolwork, as the times for the interview will be negotiated with your class teacher. The times for observation will be arranged with you so that you do not miss out. The information will be used in research report, but you have the right to say if there is anything that you do not want included. The researcher will provide you with contacts of people you can speak to, if you are found to be being abused.

Your contribution to the project is voluntary and you have the right to refuse to join in or withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions about the research, feel free to contact

Roshan Galvaan at 406 6042.

Thanking you

Roshan Galvaan

#### **4.2.2 Afrikaans**

##### **Geagte Leerling**

Roshan Galvaan, 'n arbeidsterapeut, verbonde aan die Universiteit van Kaapstad, is besig met 'n ondersoek projek met kinders by Levana Primêr en Zerilda Park Primêr.

Die doel van die ondersoek is om te bepaal watter aktiwiteite jy doen elke dag en meer oor die keuse wat jy maak. Jou naam sal nie in geen verslae gebruik word nie daarom sal niemand weet wat jy sê nie. Die antwoorde wat jy gee, sal geen impak vir jou by die skool het nie.

Jy sal 'n kamera gegee word en gevrae om fotos te neem van die aktiviteite waarin jy deelneem. Jy sal dan deelneem in 'n onderhoud waar jy meer beskryf oor jou aktiwiteits keuse. Daarna, as jy toestem, sal die navorser saam met jou gaan om te sien waar jy in aktiwiteite deelneem.

Alle onderhoude sal afgeneem word sodat geen informasie verloor is nie. Indien jy toestemming gee en indien dir moontlik is, sal fotos ook geneem word gedurende die observasie sessie.

Jy sal geen skoolwerk mis nie, want ons gaan jy and jou onderwyser vra wanneer die beste tyd is vir jou om te kom. Inligting wat jy ons gee, sal in 'n navorsing verslag gebruik word, en miskien in tydskrifte of die koerante.

Jou samewerking is vrywillig en jy het die reg om uit te trek teen enige stadium.

Indien jy enige vrae het in verband met die navorsing, voel vry om Roshan Galvaan te kontak op 406 6042.

Dankie vir u samewerking

Roshan Galvaan

## **4.5 Learner Assent to Observation**

### **4.5.1 English**

I, ....., hereby agree to join in a research study conducted by the University of Cape Town occupational therapist (Roshan Galvaan).

I have read the information sheet describing the study and agree to being observed on an agreed upon day and time.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to participate and can withdraw at any time that I feel the need to.

Please tick:

I agree to having a camera used at the observation

I do not want a camera at the observation

Signature: .....

Date: .....

### **4.5.2 Afrikaans**

Hiermee, gee ek, ..... toestemming om deel te wees van 'n navorsings studie wat deur Roshan Galvaan, 'n arbeidsterapeut van die Universiteit van Kaapstad gedoen sal word.

Ek het die inligting aangaande die projek deurgelees en stem in om 'n my aktiwiteite te laat gee my toestemming dat my seun/dogter kan deelneem aan die observasie van hul aktiviteite.

Ek is bewus dat die navorsing niks te doen het met hoe ek my kind opvoed nie en date k die reg het om te weir om teoestemming te gee.

Maak 'n kruisie:

Ek stem saam tot die observasie en die gebruik van 'n kamera

Ek stem nie saam dat my kind die observasie doen nie

Handtekening .....

Datum .....

## 4.6 Learner assent to interviews

### 4.6.1 English

I, ....., hereby agree to join in a research study conducted by the University of Cape Town occupational therapist (Roshan Galvaan).

I have read the information sheet describing the study and agree to be interviewed about and take photos of the activities that I choose to do.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to participate and can withdraw at any time that I feel the need to.

Please tick:

I agree to being taking photos of and being interviewed about my activity choices

I do not want to be interviewed or take photos of my activity choices

Signature: .....

Date: .....

### 4.6.2 Afrikaans

Hiermee gee ek, ..... toestemming om deel te wees van 'n navorsings studie wat deur die arbeidsterapeut, Roshan Galvaan, van die Universiteit van Kaapstad saamgestel is.

Ek het die inhoud bestudeer en stem in om vrae wat aan my gestel word oor aktiviteite te beantwoord.

Ek is bewus dat ek onder geen verpligting is om die navorsing te doen nie en dat ek op enige stadium mag onttrek.

Maak 'n kruis:

Ek stem saam tot die onderhoud en die gebruik van 'n kamera

Ek stem nie saam om deel te neem nie

Handtekening .....

Datum .....

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